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COURTESY MATHEW NIELSEN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

MORE HOLLAND LESS TUNNEL

A five-year, \$27 million proposal for streetscape improvements has been unveiled for Hudson Square, a neighborhood bordered by the Hudson River and Sixth

Avenue to the east and Houston and Canal Streets from north to south.

The area's park at the entrance to the Holland Tunnel—

continued on page 8

MICHAEL VAN VALKENBURGH ASSOCIATES AND THOMAS PHIFER TO DESIGN NEW PARK IN AUSTIN, TEXAS

Up a Creek



MICHAEL VAN VALKENBURGH ASSOCIATES

Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates and Thomas Phifer have won an international design competition to revitalize Waller Creek in Austin, Texas. Michael Van Valkenburgh's team was crowned victor

among finalists that included Workshop: Ken Smith, Rogers Marvel Architects and Ten Eyck; CMG and Public Architecture; and Turenscape and Lake|Flato Architects. The design aims to revitalize **continued on page 6**

Fountain of the Planets, Flushing Meadows-Corona Park



DPHETEX/Flickr

SHOP MAY DESIGN A SOCCER STADIUM IN QUEENS PARK

GOOOAAAL?

On the heels of its completion of the new Barclays Center at Atlantic Yards in Brooklyn, SHoP Architects may apply its design talents to another professional sports facility: Major League Soccer (MLS) has commissioned the local firm to draft designs for a 25,000-seat stadium, to serve an expansion team that it may bring to Queens.

Located in Flushing **continued on page 4**

SPECIAL ISSUE: LANDSCAPE IN FOCUS

WORKING IN COLLABORATION WITH ASLA NY, THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER PRESENTS OUR FIRST ISSUE DEVOTED TO LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE.

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NANCY OWENS DESIGNING PARK IN MASSIVE AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT



COURTESY NANCY OWENS STUDIO

CARTE BLANCHE

Gazing upon an acre patch of brownfield scrub grass in East New York, Nancy Owens envisions nested marsh birds, landscaped berms, and families playing in the cool light of Jamaica Bay. Her firm, Nancy Owens Studio, is completing the conceptual phase of its design for a park in Gateway Estates, a mixed Nehemiah housing and retail development along Brooklyn's eastern border.

The park is the first of three in-fill projects the New York City Department of Parks &

Recreation has planned for vacant swaths in the housing complex. According to Owens, the result will be much needed green space. "It looks a bit like *The Truman Show*," she said, citing the 1998 movie in which Jim Carrey discovers that his idyllic small town is a movie set.

Specifically, Owens's reference is to Gateway Estates' neat row houses, uniform trees, and arterial streets, which, she says, are often empty, despite **continued on page 7**

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS CLAIMING NEW GROUND. SEE PAGE 34.



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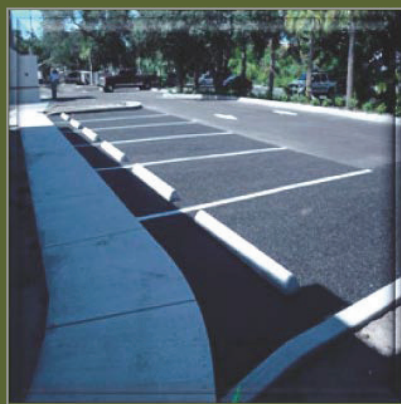
TREE SURROUNDS



MULTI SPORT SURFACING



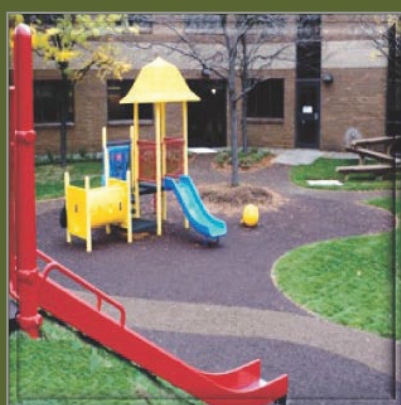
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LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE'S ASCENDANCE

In recent years, landscape architects have seen their profile rise. The discipline has gained stature in the public's imagination, as well as among the allied disciplines of architecture, planning, and even civil and transportation engineering. Some, like prominent New Urbanists, have tried to paint this growth as a threat to architects and town planners, couched in a reheated rad versus trad debate (don't we have more pressing issues than endlessly rehashing the style wars?).

There are a number of reasons for landscape architecture's prominence. Catalytic projects like the High Line, Chicago's Millenium Park, and LA's new Grand Park have certainly galvanized the public around the need for high quality parks and public space. New York is reclaiming its waterfront through projects large and small, and marquee projects like Governor's Island the Fresh Kills promise to re-orient the city to embrace its identity as an archipelago.

Landscape architects have also been actively redefining what they do, reclaiming the profession's civic role and layering on new environmental and infrastructural potentials. Landscape architects have also been effective in claiming urbanism as their purview. Changes in federal and city policy have reinforced that role through programs like "Greening America's Capitals" and New York's Clean Water Act consent agreement with the EPA. As an observer, these developments appear great for urban areas. As cities cope and adapt to climate change and rising sea levels, I expect the discipline's role to continue to expand.

Landscape architecture's dynamism, however, also points to certain weaknesses in contemporary architecture and planning. Architecture has been caught in a kind of hangover from the pre-crash years. Much of the profession, not to mention architectural education, is still too obsessed with architecture-as-object. The rise of tactical urbanism is a reaction to this, and also often involves landscape-based projects. Planning seems even more stuck. Too afraid to engage with design—following the failures of much of modernist planning—planners have either buried their noses in policy or retreated into colored-pencil-clichés of urbanism that seem dated. Landscape architects have stepped into that vacuum.

For the public, my hunch is that landscape architects offer something that architects typically do not. Parks and gardens have always engaged our Edenic fantasies. In a world under strain these places must also do considerable work, absorbing stormwater, filtering air pollution, and providing refuge in an increasingly urbanized world. Landscape architects are offering redemptive visions for neglected, damaged, and underutilized places. Environmental problems may seem overwhelming and insurmountable. But landscape architects offer solutions to improve our roofs, our blocks, our neighborhoods, a nearby waterway, or the city at large. If that sounds patronizing, it's not meant to be. In the absence of aggressive federal (let alone global) environmental action to address the myriad of challenges we face, these interventions take on a critical, if piecemeal, significance.

We would like to thank the ASLA NY for honoring us at this year's President's Dinner, and for collaborating with us on this issue. We at *The Architect's Newspaper* believe in the transformative potential of architecture and landscape architecture, and we raise a toast to landscape architecture's overdue star turn. **ALAN G. BRAKE**

GOOOAAAL? continued from front page

Meadows-Corona Park, the proposed stadium would be sited beside the 7 subway line on top of the existing Fountain of the Planets, a pool created for the 1963 World's Fair. The project is part of a larger development for the park that includes new facilities and parking structures for the United States Tennis Association (USTA) as well as a 1.4-million-square-foot shopping mall and a luxury hotel. None of what's planned, however, will happen without a fight.

The reason is opposition from the population that uses Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. That green space, hemmed in by two highways, a polluted bay, and Citi Field Stadium, serves the densely-populated, immigrant-rich communities of Corona, Flushing, Elmhurst, and Jackson Heights. Residents of these neighborhoods weekly flood the park by the tens of thousands to pursue various recreation activities or just take in some fresh air. Many have objected to the proposed stadium, saying it will crowd out their green oasis. "This is where my three-and-a-half-year-old son runs around the fountain," Donovan Finn, a Jackson Heights resident and associate professor of environmental studies at Stony Brook University, told the *New York Times*. "This is our park. Why is it O.K. to do this to us?"

MLS claims the stadium—originally proposed for Pier 40 in Manhattan, only to be shot down by community activists there—will be good for both the city and the community. MLS Director Mark Abbott told *Sporting News* that the amount of green space required to build the stadium would be replaced "elsewhere." The league also said that the new stadium would create between 2,100 and 2,300 construction-related jobs, 160 part-time jobs, and 750 full-time jobs.

Community members have also raised concerns that the new stadium's parking lots will eat up more parkland. MLS says that the stadium would come with an additional 4,400 parking spaces (4,100 for fans and 300 for players and VIPs), though where this parking would be sited has yet to be determined. And while the Bloomberg administration claims that the stadium will open up another revenue stream for the city, community members doubt that the park will see any improvements as a result.

Local Queens community members are not the only ones resisting the project. The USTA could become the stadium's most deep-pocketed opponent. "It raises a lot of concerns for us," Gordon Smith, USTA's director, told the *Times*. Smith singled out what he described as the new stadium's noise pollution and its new surface parking, saying that both would have negative impacts on the environment, community, and USTA's new facility. "We ought to be considered in a very different light, because we raise almost none of those complications," Smith said. The USTA argues that while more than half of its fans use mass transit to travel to the U.S. Open, more people would drive to soccer games in a stadium built farther from trains and subways. This scenario would require more roads and surface parking, and congestion close to the tennis center, Smith said.

SHoP and New York City's Parks Department did not respond to requests for comment. **GABRIEL FUENTES**

CORRECTIONS

In the article "Lighting the Way to Freedom" (AN 16_10.17.2012) we inadvertently misspelled Linnaea Tillett's name and that of her firm, Tillett Lighting Design.

In the article "Skyline Adrift" (AN 16_10.17.2012), the reviewer mistakenly referred to Architecture Omi's director Peter Franck as David. It also wrongly asserted that Peter Franck was the founding director

of that institution, when, in fact, he was the founding curator of the Fields Sculpture Park at the Omi International Arts Center. We regret all errors.

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TWINKLE TOES

In a recent issue of *The New Yorker*, writer **Ben McGrath** profiles **Steve Clarkson**, the private football coach to the quarterbacks of tomorrow. The writer interviews several adolescent clients attending Clarkson's elite practice camp, including 10-year old **Miller Moss** (also featured on the article's only photo). During a workout McGrath finds Moss' father in the stands—California-based architect **Eric Owen Moss**. "I would be completely disingenuous if I didn't say I really enjoy this stuff," said the elder Moss of the high-stakes training. "I'm embarrassed a little bit. It's contagious in a way that even parents who should know better don't always." The design influence of the architect—once called the "jeweler of junk" by **Philip Johnson**—may be evident on the field: his son sports silver Nike cleats with the nickname "Miller Time" embroidered in gold.

CLEAN VITRINE

On October 16 thieves nabbed a handful of valuable paintings, including works by **Picasso**, **Matisse**, and **Monet**, from the **Kunsthal** gallery in Rotterdam. At least one person points the finger at the architecture by home team **OMA**. Citing an interview with Dutch security expert **Ton Cremers**, Dezeen.com reports that the open plan and glass walls are a nightmare for guards. Cremers appreciates the design aesthetic of the museum, which was completed in 1992, but noted, "It's an awful building to protect."

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THE FIFTH STREET FARM PROJECT ROLLS OUT ITS FIRST ROOFTOP



ATSUKO QUIRK

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Atop the Robert Simon Complex's public school building in the East Village, on the afternoon of October 12, fourth grader **Malik Shah** tossed a kale salad that had been harvested from the school's new rooftop farm.

That leafy repast formed the centerpiece of a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Fifth Street Farm Project, where city officials and urban farm advocates praised the project and challenged those present to envision a broad future for urban farming in schools citywide.

A loosely-organized group of parents, teachers, and friends first conceived the Fifth Street Farm Project in 2007. Group members sought to address childhood health and climate concerns. They also aimed to bring a hands-on education to the mix of elementary and middle-school students of the three schools—P.S. 64, the Earth School, and Tompkins Square Middle School—that

share the building.

The next year, 2008, the project teamed up with architect and student parent **Michael Arad**. Arad's initial cost-efficient plan had the rooftop farm contained in wading pools. The group found this proposal to be too elementary to do a good job of teaching students about farming, and Arad went back to the drawing board. His next plan involved prefabricated planters. That proposal did not receive approval or funding from the School Construction Authority, which viewed it as strategically unsound because it would have imposed too much weight on the building's roof.

Arad's final plan, which he intends to be, "a mold other schools can emulate and learn from," employs roof dunnage—steel beams typically used to install heavy mechanical equipment on roofs not built to support such weight. The dunnage beams span the distances among

the building's load-bearing columns, providing a stable grid to underpin a deck for the farm. The \$1.1 million, 2,400-square-foot project occupies roughly half of the building's roof and features three long rows of planter boxes, some already filled with leafy greens.

At the ceremony, students enthusiastically explained the concepts of solar energy and composting to the crowd. On hand were Manhattan Borough President **Scott Stringer** and State Senator **Daniel Squadron**, (whose 25th district includes the East Village, the Lower East Side, and parts of Brooklyn), who both helped secure funding for the project.

Student parent **Douglas Fountain**, who has been involved in the project from day one, gestured to the other, not-yet-planted half of the roof. "We're ready to go again," he said.

JACLYN HERSH



> **HORIZON PLAZA**
Washington Street and Central Avenue
Newark, New Jersey
Designer: Michael Graves & Associates

COURTESY NEWARK MUSEUM

On October 16, the City of Newark opened Horizon Plaza, Newark's first new green space in decades. Designed by the Princeton, New Jersey, office of Michael Graves & Associates and sited at the intersection of Washington Street and Central Avenue, adjacent to the Newark Museum's southeast entrance, the 11,000-square-foot park marks the first milestone in Newark's effort to regenerate its Washington Park neighborhood and James Street Commons Historic District.

The \$2.6 million plaza fills a lot formerly occupied by abolitionist **Abraham Polhemus**'s 1858 house. The Polhemus House, razed earlier this year, was celebrated throughout the community as the defining element of the historic district. Michael Graves said that saving the house would have been too expensive, and explained how the structure "fell into disarray after the mortar deteriorated and the cement got wet," causing the building's eventual collapse.

Graves designed Horizon Plaza to serve as a community gateway to the museum, where, upon entering, visitors can "follow the building's skylights and embark down a yellow brick road of the museum's history."

To preserve the history of the site, the architect "mapped out the landscape to replicate" the original blueprint of the house as an outline for the garden. Rows of low-maintenance shrubs and greenery native to Essex County delineate the exact floor plan of the Polhemus House, with two steel and marble structures marking the location of the home's hearths. **CLARA FREEDMAN**



project: Giant Yellow Teddy Bear artist: Urs Fischer stone: High Ridge Granite sculpture base pieces, flamed finish

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER OCTOBER 31, 2012



Clockwise from top, left: Proposals by CMG and Public Architecture; Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates and Thomas Phifer; Workshop: Ken Smith, Rogers Marvel Architects and Ten Eyck; Turenscape and Lake|Flato Architects.



COURTESY RESPECTIVE TEAMS

UP A CREEK continued from front page a one-and-a-half mile stretch of the riparian corridor connecting the University of Texas at Austin with the downtown district.

Waller Creek is a thin, urban riparian ecosystem that meanders for seven miles

from the northern part of the city southward through the University of Texas at Austin campus, eventually meeting Lady Bird Lake. Over the years, much of the creek corridor has suffered from erosion, invasive species, and pollution. The competition sought to

expose these conditions and invite leading professionals to re-envision the area as a vibrant, livable, workable district. In conjunction with the City of Austin, the Waller Creek Conservancy has led the charge to transform this unsightly swath of urban

decay into a connected oasis.

"This project is far too complex to resolve with a single sweeping design gesture, or by simplifying the creek to an idealized prior condition," principal Michael Van Valkenburgh said in a statement. He added: "We

seek to create an exciting and humane landscape that will be critical to great city life in Austin."

For the design proposal, Waller Creek will act as a chain of mini-parks with four main concentrations: the Confluence, the Refuge, the Grove, and the Lattice. The Confluence, currently Waterloo Park, will primarily serve as a space for social gatherings and will be the setting for "the Poppy," a lightweight pavilion. The Refuge and the Grove will highlight much of the area's well-known live oak trees and limestone geology as well as open up a flexible program regime. The Lattice will feature six trail bridges traversing Waller Creek until the point where it flows into Lady Bird Creek.

Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA) aims to bring its signature urbanistic approach to landscape that is unique to the location. "MVVA will seize this moment to create a place that is provocative, yet essentially Austinian in spirit by unleashing the

dynamic beauty of a reinvented water course and infusing it with the right mix of economic and social attractors that will reshape the city's evolving identity," Van Valkenburgh said in a statement.

Stephanie Lee McDonald, the executive director of the Waller Creek Conservancy, said she is enthusiastic about the decision. "The final proposals were very strong, but MVVA and Thomas Phifer were balanced," McDonald said, calling the project one of "ecological restoration, restoring people as well as the environment with places to connect and engage with social activity." The Conservancy predicts a necessary construction budget of \$50 million to \$60 million. Group members will now embark on a feasibility study and cost analysis to determine a more complete budget. They expect the study to be completed by next year. However, McDonald predicts total costs of well over \$100 million. **TYLER SILVESTRO**

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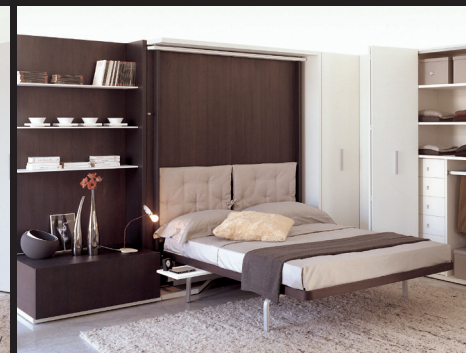
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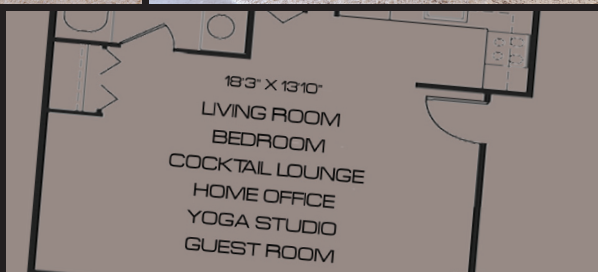
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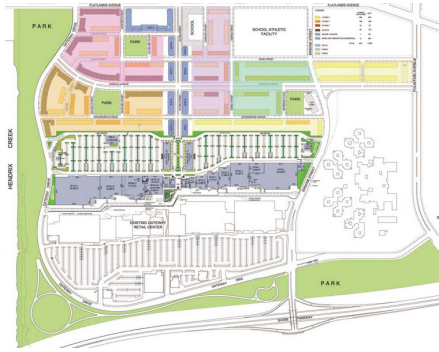
CARTE BLANCHE continued from front page the nearly-filled 2,385 housing units. As a young community, the estates still await inclusive areas for recreation and a place for families to gather; it is this program of active recreation and community use that Owens and her team are eager to sculpt.

"I like the carte blanche," she says. "You can completely imagine how the park will take shape. There is no pre-existing park or program you have to work within." The carte blanche model is one Owens is comfortable with. The studio's Estella Diggs Park in the Bronx is roughly the same size, and was another site where the design team wielded total conceptual freedom. At Estella Diggs the imperative was simply to build a beautiful space for the Bronx; in Brooklyn the needs of the site are more complex.

An RFP for the project, for example, asks for basketball courts, handball courts, volleyball courts, a playground, adult fitness facilities, and a comfort station—all on the lean budget of \$3,571,400. Such a host of active uses often means squares of asphalt and lots of fencing, but Owens' design resists that. Like the dunes along the shores of nearby Jamaica Bay, her planned mounded earth and manipulated topography will work in symbiosis with furling pathways and planted areas. The objective will be to separate and demarcate courts, reducing fencing while rupturing the horizontality of the surrounding facades.

"Maybe a series of rectangles projecting vertically would play off the facades of the houses and have a sculptural quality," Owens speculates, saying she is considering a strategy to bring fluid edges to square court games.

Still working on the conceptual level, Owens is keen to push herself. Adding



COURTESY NANCY OWENS STUDIO

Above: Gateway Park will replace swaths of scrubgrass brownfield that surround this East New York housing development.

something entirely new to the city's network of parks—instead of updating a Robert Moses-era inheritance, as is often the case—is a great responsibility, she states, and the question is how to fit the design to the history of the site and its context.

"Elevation" here is both literal and conceptual inspiration. Bounded on one side by Fresh Creek, a stone's throw from Gateway National Recreation area, yet also a former landfill and a one-time dumping ground for famous crime syndicate Murder Incorporated, the Gateway Estates has a mandate to wed its natural ecology to an ecology of community.

Indigenous flora, flyways, and drainage runs will interlace the landscape, choreographing its multiple functions in micro-habitats. "I'm excited to see how the park activates the site," said Owens. She says her firm hopes to give the Estates not only a playground and park benches, but also an opportunity to connect with nature, providing an education often absent in the city.

CAITLIN BLANCHFIELD

Williams Tsien's Lakeside Center, Prospect Park.



COURTESY TOD WILLIAMS BILLIE TSIENT ARCHITECTS

PROSPECT PARK RESTORES PORTION OF OLMSTED'S ORIGINAL DESIGN

MUSIC ISLAND

On October 19, the Prospect Park Alliance cut the ribbon on the restoration of Music Island and the Esplanade—portions of the original Fredrick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux design that were destroyed in 1960 to make way for Wolman Rink.

The alliance based its restoration efforts on Olmsted and Vaux's original plans as well as archival photographic analysis and certain pieces of stone and cast iron that were found buried on the site. It removed inva-

sive species of plants while re-excavating the five acre lake. It rebuilt granite walls along the formal part of the esplanade and extended the soft edge with boulders, native trees, shrubs, and aquatic plants. It also restored the radial path system and terrace that once surrounded the lake.

A second phase of construction, currently underway, will add a new 25,000-square-foot facility and two skating rinks designed by Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects and constructed by Sciame. The second phase is scheduled to be completed in December 2013. The rinks will host ice-skating and hockey in the fall and winter and roller skating and a water playground in the spring and summer. **AARON SEWARD**

LAWN

AND ORDER



Colleges today are rethinking not only the structure of their curriculum, but also that of their classrooms. With **John Jay College of Criminal Justice** outgrowing its widely scattered facilities, school officials asked **Skidmore, Owings & Merrill** to design a new vertical campus consolidating all social and academic functions, including a **65,000-square-foot roof terrace**, within a single city block. Using steel girders to span a network of Amtrak tunnels running beneath the prominent Midtown site made the design possible. Now, John Jay students are better able to collaborate across disciplines and enhance their legal research—proving it's easy to build a case for choosing structural steel.

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MORE HOLLAND LESS TUNNEL continued from front page currently an exhaust-choked triangular gravel patch known as Freeman Plaza—won't become the next Herald Square any time soon, but both subtle and immediate upgrades to be made throughout the neighborhood will expand sidewalks and seating options while mitigating the psychological impacts of tunnel traffic on pedestrians.

Historically, Hudson Square's warehouses once hummed with printing presses, but they've been converted to loft-like offices that have attracted technology and creative companies, including architecture and design firms. Though more than 35,000 people work in the area, they have access to less than one acre of public space.

That's going to change. Ellen Baer, president

of the Hudson Square Connection Business Improvement District (BID), the non-profit behind the proposed improvements, said that, traditionally, "This has been an area of the city where pedestrians haven't mattered, and all we're trying to do is restore the natural urban balance." The neighborhood may soon be rezoned to allow more residential occupancy (currently less than 4 percent), and while those zoning changes may dovetail nicely with the upcoming street improvements, the timing is purely coincidental, said Baer.

Signe Nielsen, principal of design team leader Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects, agreed. "People often assume there has to be residential use in an area before open space is really necessary," Nielsen said. But playgrounds and basketball courts are not always

the goal. People in the area just need a place to sit down, she said.

Led by Mathews Nielsen, the design team (including Rogers Marvel Architects; Billings Jackson Design; and Arup and Open) proposed a variety of improvements for the neighborhood's north-south and east-west corridors. SoHo Square, enhanced with new paving and custom seating, will become the gateway. Narrower traffic lanes on Varick Street, a main thoroughfare for tunnel traffic, will allow for wider sidewalks with seating, to include subway grate benches. Since the subway runs below, planting street trees is not an option. Instead, designers, wanting to integrate some green, proposed vine-covered planters that will function as "personal parks," providing shade and seating while serving

as visual and acoustic buffers from traffic.

Hudson Street's lanes will also be reduced to gain six feet for pedestrians, and this strip will be furnished as a series of "outdoor living rooms." Spring Street, which connects SoHo to the waterfront, will be subtly enhanced with new light fixtures and street trees.

The Hudson Square Connection has already installed some new bike racks and benches, but the group's more ambitious plans are subject to public review and agency approval. As for the proposed park by the tunnel entrance? It's on the wish list. Renderings of the park's design, which incorporates grassy berms to dull the drone of traffic from tunnel approach ramps, are expected to be released next month.

MURRYE BERNARD

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WXY EXPANDS THE DRAWING CENTER'S SOHO HOME



AGING GRACEFULLY IN PLACE

When Martha Beck left MoMA as chief curator of drawings to establish The Drawing Center in 1977, it was unclear whether the radical new downtown gallery would survive. Thirty-five years later, the center is about to open once more after an 18-month closure and a \$10 million renovation by WXY architecture + urban design.

"It's been an exercise in architecture, engineering, and efficiency," said Brett Littman, the center's director. With a new entrance, circulation, offices and three new galleries under the same roof, the project has also been an exercise in tentative space making. When the gallery opens on November 3, it will be 9,150 square feet in size, 50 percent bigger than before. The project also marks an important progression for the center itself, which has been embroiled in uncertainty for the last 10 years.

In 1999, The Drawing Center, with WXY and the Wooster Group, developed a plan for a new cultural facility in Chelsea. The plans were shelved when funding became scarce post-9/11. In 2004, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation selected the gallery as one of four institutions that would form the visual arts component of the World Trade Center site, to be housed in a Snohetta-designed complex, along with the Signature and Joyce theaters. However, a clash between the center's programming integrity and that of the memorial site soon thwarted the partnership.

In 2006, plans were drawn up for a 30,000-square-foot commercial-arts building in the South Street Seaport. The global financial crisis delivered a reality check, however, and Littman—fresh from MoMA PS1—believed that bringing the disparate spaces into the existing gallery could provide a far better opportunity at a far smaller cost (\$50 million less). They then purchased a second-floor condo above the gallery and briefed WXY for the project, titled ReDraw.

Led by WXY co-founder Claire Weisz with Buro Happold, the design and implementation has been swift. "There isn't an architect in the world that knows this gallery or understands it better than Claire," said Littman. Her involvement as its architect consultant for the last decade has put Weisz in a unique position to respond to the center's agenda quickly and with confidence. "We didn't want too much architecture," said Weisz.

The building has been gutted, and its foundations were extended by two feet and reinforced. At the front, an open lobby, integrated technology, and a built-in bookstore with

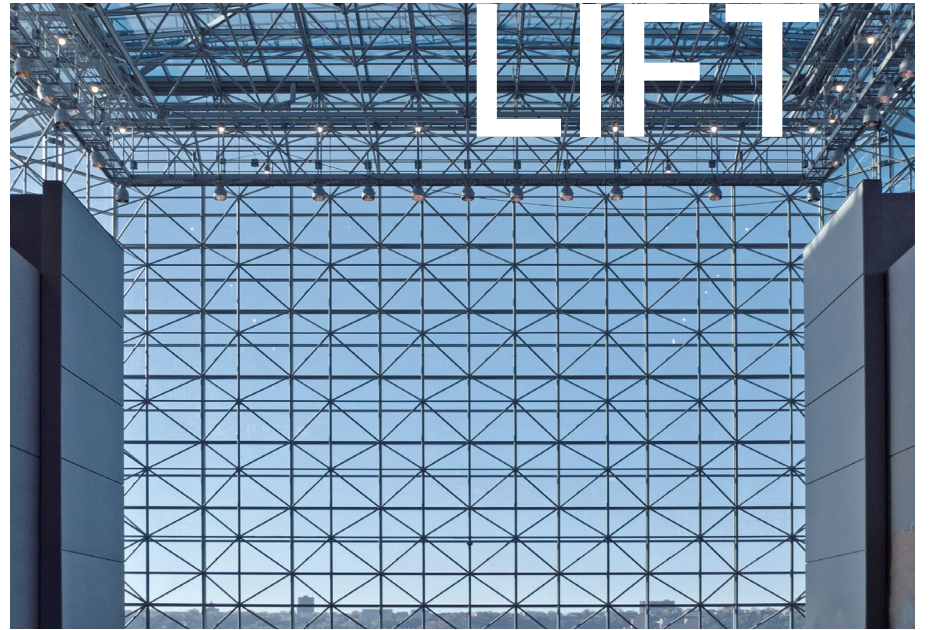
flexible shelving open out to the characteristic Corinthian colonnade, whose bare flutes (many of the capitals were found to be false and were removed) punch a line through the main gallery. Behind the reception area, Weisz has designed a sculptural steel-plate picket railing with varying incisions that play on perspective. While little has been changed on the landmarked cast-iron facade, a broad diamond steel-plate staircase and ADA-compliant elevator make the Center more visible and welcoming to passers-by. The Drawing Room, once the experimental sister gallery opposite, has been nestled into the rear of the ground floor, and a "punk" gallery, the Lab, occupies the basement. Separated from the main space, these elements are connected by a bold white oak-panel staircase.

The architecture itself has exquisite composition. In the main gallery, a suspended ceiling stops short of the white walls in a razor-edge light cradle. In the Drawing Room, the same team has produced a skylight with a concave drop ceiling and a 12-inch wide slit that filters light onto the wall. WXY has drawn inspiration from natural light galleries and "galleries that successfully reinterpret in-place, such as the Serpentine in London," said Weisz. The result is a series of generous, legible spaces with details that lift the interior and softly pull the outside in.

A case study for other small-scale institutions suffocating from ever-shrinking support, the Drawing Center has looked within to address such pressures. Given his aim to continue expanding and to eschew the trend to populate downtown with boutiques and condos, Littman puts forth a vision that is clear: "It's all about intelligent growth." **GWEN WEBBER**



COURTESY WXY ARCHITECTURE + URBAN DESIGN

SPACE
LIFT

Since its construction in 1982, the **Jacob K. Javits Center** has been one of the world's leading examples of space-frame design. But the **I.M. Pei & Partners**-designed exhibit space needed updating to put its best face forward for the 3.5 million visitors it receives each year. So owners engaged **Epstein Global** and **FXFowle Architects**, who developed the recladding program that is dramatically increasing the building's transparency and energy efficiency. Targeting LEED Silver with a glazing system that will enable the building to exceed energy code requirements by 25 percent, the new face of Javits proves that being old doesn't have to mean retiring.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER OCTOBER 31, 2012



NELSON BYRD WOLTZ CREATING PUBLIC SPACES FOR MEGADEVELOPMENT

HUDSON'S NEW FRONT YARDS

The dusty rail yards and blocks of barren concrete on Manhattan's far west side are beginning to be transformed into the office, retail, residential, and cultural mega-development called Hudson Yards. At its center will be a new civic square designed by Nelson Byrd Woltz Landscape Architects (NBWLA). The firm is also designing the six acres of streetscapes for the project.

Hudson Yards will connect with three other significant landscapes: The High Line at the south, Hudson River Park to the west, and new Hudson Boulevard, which is being designed by Michael Van Valkenburgh, to the north. For NBWLA principal Thomas Woltz, the meandering nature of the High Line and Hudson Boulevard

and the linearity of the Hudson River Park called for a large-scale gathering place within Hudson Yards, which would become a destination and defining feature for this *tabula rasa* neighborhood. "One of the goals is to connect to these landscapes fluidly but distinctly," Woltz said. "The urban plaza should be a kind of sitting room for the entire west side. It should be a place for spectacle, large groups, small groups, and individuals."

Though the design is still evolving, Woltz and the developers, Related and Oxford Properties Group, are planning a six-acre plaza ringed with trees, a water feature, and a large central artwork. Woltz intends to use innovative horticulture as a major formal feature of the plaza, including large

stands of clipped native trees, and seasonally timed plantings to draw visitors and New Yorkers. "That could be a massive bulb display for Fashion Week," Woltz said. "We want the horticulture to be something people come to see throughout the year."

For the landscape architects, creating intimate spaces under the canopies will also give the space a human scale, something they feel is crucial given the great height of the adjacent skyscrapers. "It will create a soft ceiling," Woltz said. Café chairs and tables on crushed stone will populate the ground beneath the monolithic tree canopies. The plaza will be a privately owned public space, so it should be highly maintained. "Related has made a commitment to create a great public space for New York over the long term. Too often maintenance is overlooked," he said.

For the streetscapes, Woltz is looking at

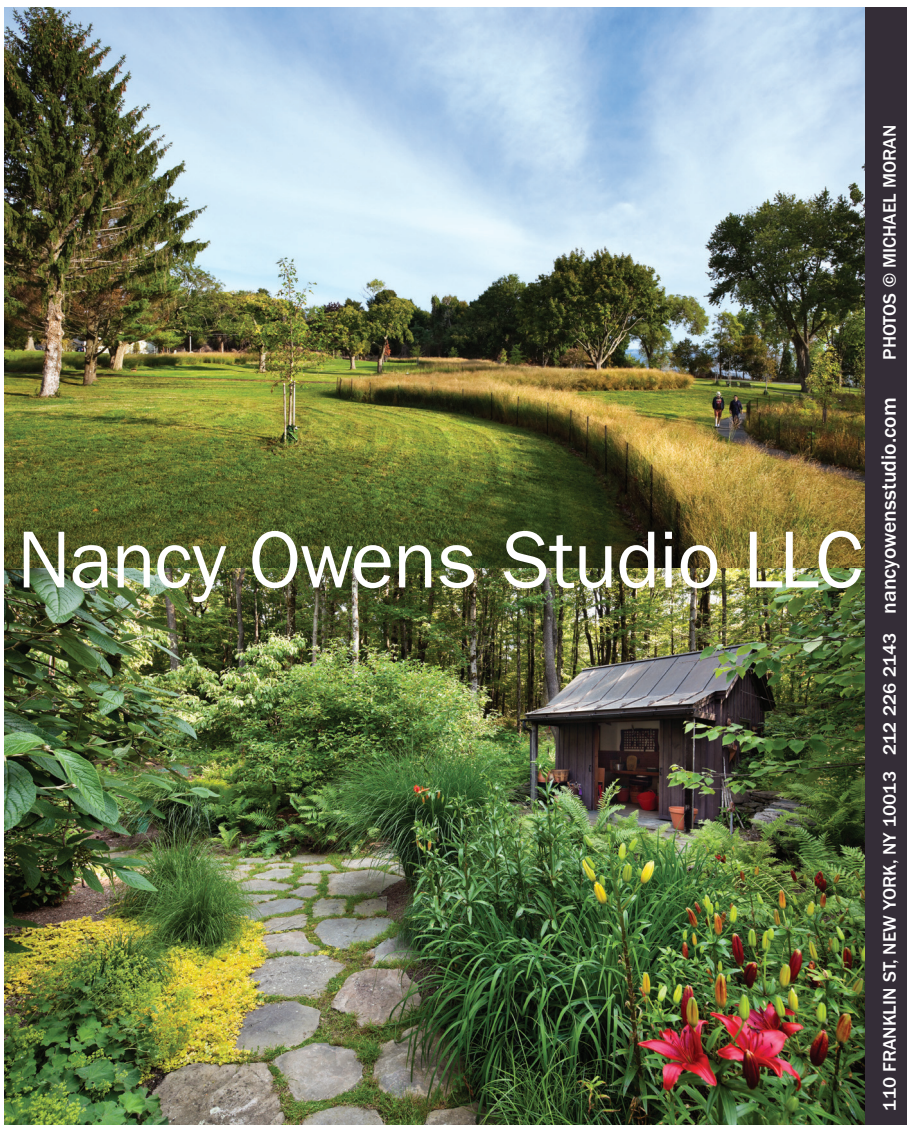
European models where sidewalks flow seamlessly into streets without curbs and bollards to protect pedestrians.

Though NBWLA has a national reputation built on dozens of award winning projects, Hudson Yards is by far the firm's most prominent commission in New York to date. For Woltz, working on a landscape of this scale and civic impact is nothing less than "career-defining," he said.

"The open spaces in Hudson Yards are our greatest honor and obligation to the city. This will be our legacy for all New Yorkers to enjoy," wrote Jay Cross, president of Related Hudson Yards, in an email. As with LA's new Grand Park, which Related helped develop and will maintain as a part of their massive Grand Avenue Project, the developers see high quality public space as a major amenity for real estate development. **AGB**



NELSON BYRD WOLTZ



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The news is good for the hotel industry. According to a new survey of owners, estimated spending on hotel improvements should reach \$5 billion this year, the highest since 2008.

The survey, authored by the Preston Robert Tisch Center for Hospitality, Tourism and Sports Management at New York University provides an informative look into the thinking of hotel industry leaders and their plans for maintaining their brand equity during the downturn in occupancy over the last two years. Savvy hotel brands used lower occupancy rates to make capital improvements. Hotel owners know they have to continue investing in guest rooms, restaurants and public spaces if they want to sustain price increases and hopefully achieve higher occupancy.

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Andreas Dimitriadis of platinumdesign

LAUFEN's living square collection was designed by Andreas Dimitriadis of platinumdesign to provide complete solutions for bathrooms with recessed or asymmetrical walls. Given living square's ability to be cut to millimeter perfection, architects and designers can depend on living square to work with the overall look of the bathroom; providing a sleek and contemporary look which fits into the tightest spaces.



Roberto Palomba of Palomba Serafini Associati

When architect's need statement pieces, they look to LAUFEN's award-winning **Palomba Collection**. In 2012, LAUFEN again collaborated with Roberto Palomba and together they created an additional selection of vessels and vanities that speak to the Palomba's organic 'fingerprint of nature' look and feel. The coordinating bathtub and furniture combine to give architects a rich palate from which to choose.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER OCTOBER 31, 2012

NETTE COMPTON, NYC PARKS DIRECTOR OF GREEN INFRA-STRUCTURE, TALKS ABOUT THE GREENSTREETS PROGRAM

HOTTER, WETTER, AND MORE CROWDED

An analysis of flood-related complaints in New York City received via the 311 hotline has found that the majority come from just seven distinct neighborhoods scattered across priority watersheds in the Bronx, Queens, and Staten Island. That is the conclusion of Nette Compton, director of green infrastructure, and her staff at the city's parks department.

With funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment "stimulus" Act, Compton has led the successful Greenstreets program over the past two years, building stormwater capture sites in 28 locations crucial to alleviating storm sewers and addressing flood problems. *AN* caught up with Compton to talk about her creative problem solving and get a sneak peek at what green infrastructure will revitalize next.

This is a city infrastructure project, so what's the parks department's involvement?

Over the past 16 years our office has been in partnership with the Department of Transportation (DOT) to design and build Greenstreets. My office works to modify street geometry and transform streets into

greener, safer, and more ecologically functional areas. While each site as a whole does not appear as grandiose as a waterfront or park, this approach to landscape design is a crucial piece to how we can meet the goals and challenges of 21st century cities, which will be hotter, wetter, and more crowded. Our work also informed the parks department's designs for the future as we improved soil types, plant selection, and inlet design. All 28 sites are now complete and include monitoring equipment.

What makes a green infrastructure system truly green?

"Green infrastructure" has been defined in many ways, sometimes simply because it's not gray infrastructure—that is, all of the purely man-made, engineered solutions used to manage the city's water and sewer needs. At Parks, we look at this much more comprehensively, starting with a shift in thinking about water as an asset rather than a waste product. Green infrastructure can transform unused space, such as overly-wide sidewalks and roads, stripped-off roadway, and awkward intersections. In its place we install healthy plantings fed by the additional

stormwater entering the site. There are other benefits, too, such as calmer traffic, since vehicles travel more slowly down tree-lined streets. On a larger scale we're creating a network of green spaces that shade pavements, provide habitat, and beautify entire neighborhoods. The combined size of New York City's Greenstreets is 85 acres, almost all of which would otherwise be impervious surfaces.

How do you redirect the 5.6 million gallons of stormwater collected at the 28 sites?

The water is diverted into planting beds, where it is absorbed into the soil or used by the plants. Any overflow exits the Greenstreet and enters the sewer to eliminate the risk of standing water or flooding in the area. These sites are specially designed to handle this amount of water through deeper excavation and specially-designed soil and stone layers. This allows the system to move large volumes of water quickly while still holding on to some for the plants.

Citywide, we estimate that our 2,536 Greenstreets capture 105 million gallons of water per year. What's even more exciting is that they're influencing the city's hydrology beyond their borders. A 1,000-square-foot Greenstreet, for example, can handle runoff from a 3,000- to 10,000-square-foot area.

Is filtering and reusing the collected stormwater an option?

Filtering and reusing the stormwater for other purposes can be complicated, in order to meet

city health codes. The easiest use of stormwater is to direct it into planting beds, as it requires very little pre-treatment and is immediately available to plants and eventually to the ground water.

Now that a year or two have passed since many of these sites have been built, what's working and what have you learned?

The main lessons we learned are to make the inlet wider than you think it needs to be, to make the design and maintenance as simple as possible, and to pre-treat your runoff before it enters the main planting area, which helps trap sediment and trash in one concentrated place, preserving the rest of the area and making cleanup simpler.

The systems piloted here are now being used in many of our designs with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Whenever possible, these are at the surface, so their function is visible to the public and maintenance crews. **So you're working on a project with DEP now?**

Yes, DEP has identified priority sewersheds throughout the city that are in the greatest need of sustainable stormwater infrastructure. Sewersheds are essentially the network of sewers that drain into a particular area or water body, much like a watershed, though they aren't always the same. Parks, along with DOT and several other city agencies, has partnered with DEP to build green infrastructure on a massive scale in these sewersheds. This will include stormwater Greenstreets,

such as bumpouts, neckdowns, and swales, as well as DEP's Right-of-Way Bioswales (ROWB), which were designed by DEP with input from DOT and Parks. At first glance they look like large tree pits with a surrounding fence and understory plantings. However, there is much more going on underground, with two feet of engineered soil and two feet of open-graded stone, allowing ROWBs to capture up to 250 cubic feet of runoff for every one-inch storm.

This fall, Parks will construct 121 bioswales and 17 greenstreets in the Bronx and Flushing. We'll expand in the spring, with an estimated 72 bioswales and 12 greenstreets in the Bronx and Flushing, and over 200 sites by summer 2013, with many more to come. This work will be funded by DEP, including maintenance, which is exciting for two big reasons. One is that dedicated maintenance by trained personnel will ensure that these sites work better and last longer. On a larger scale it indicates that green infrastructure is not considered solely for its aesthetic or "feel-good" attributes, but that it's a respected method for managing large volumes of stormwater in a cost-effective manner. As a city, we would never build a waste water treatment facility without also expecting to fund the maintenance. The fact that we are funding green infrastructure in a similar way indicates that it has graduated into a field of trusted engineering.

PERRIN DRUMM



COURTESY NYC PARKS AND RECREATION

APOPS AND MUNICIPAL ART SOCIETY DIGITIZES NEW YORK'S PRIVATELY OWNED PUBLIC SPACES

POPS Goes the Website

Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS) have lately leaped into the daily lexicon, thanks to promotion from an unexpected source: Occupy Wall Street. Today, New York City has around 525 POPS, created as a result of the city's 1961 zoning resolution granting zoning concessions in return for public space. Yet despite their considerable number, many of these spaces remain shrouded in obscurity.

"Occupy Wall Street did us a favor when they put the spotlight on Zuccotti Park," said Jerold Kayden, founder of Advocates for Privately Owned Public Space (APOPS). "They reminded us that these spaces are there to be claimed."

On October 18, Kayden and the Municipal Art Society (MAS) launched a new mobile-friendly website—apops.mas.org—to engage and inform the public by making data, photos, and site plans of the parks available in an easy-to-use format. The information was drawn from a comprehensive study in 2000 of the city's POPS and from Kayden's subsequent book, *Privately Owned Public Space: The New York City Experience*.

On the website, users can browse detailed

information on each POPS location, learning about its amenities, history, and hours of access. "We're in the process of really bringing the information up to date," Kayden said. "In 2000, it was in perfect shape, with incredible information, including all of the legal obligations attached to each of these spaces." Mobile users can also geo-locate themselves to find nearby POPS to explore.

The public can participate in the project by ranking and commenting on POPS, making recommendations and announcements, posting photos, and reporting problems with the public spaces. Information submitted will appear online, but according to Kayden, future phases may

involve more active communication among the public, property owners, and the city, especially in terms of reporting and correcting problems. "This isn't a 'gotcha' thing, but it's also not just allowing the owners to do whatever they want," he said. "We plan to take these comments and forward them to the appropriate parties."

"At the end of the day, we don't care about digital, we care about physical public space," Kayden continued. "We're inviting the public to be our eyes and ears as a means to make these spaces more of an asset for everyone in the city. We also intend to make people in other cities realize they can do the same thing."

BRANDEN KLAYKO

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COURTESY WEST 8

The first phase of construction efforts to transform Governors Island from a Coast Guard base into a public park has been underway since May, racing toward an expected completion by the fall of 2013. Designed by Dutch landscape architecture practice West 8 with contributions from local firms MNLA, Rogers Marvel Architects, and Diller Scofidio + Renfro, the makeover focuses on altering a once closed and militarily regimented

environment into one that encourages visitors to explore, interact, and claim the grounds as their own.

The first phase includes the restoration of many of the historic buildings on the island as well as the construction of 30 contiguous acres of new parkland. This includes Soissons Landing, the long-time ferry dock by which visitors will access the island; Liggett Terrace, a patio tucked into the embracing wings of the McKim, Meade & White-designed,

neo-georgian Liggett Hall; Hammock Grove, an undulating forested area; and the Play Lawn, an 11-acre grassy field for sports and sunbathing.

The alterations being made to Soissons Landing and Liggett Terrace are relatively straightforward from an engineering and construction point of view. The ferry dock is being made more inviting with the addition of shade trees and mosaic paving. Visitors will be greeted

by the opportunity to take a spin on free bicycles. Signage by design firm Pentagram will make it clear which way to go to find what. Restrooms, concessions, and other amenities are being integrated into the historic structures that surround the landing. Liggett Terrace will capitalize on the sheltering aspects of the existing architecture and will feature more mosaic paving as well as flowerbeds and café seating.

Things get more interest-

ing at Hammock Grove and the Play Lawn. The first step in the process of turning this old military marching ground into a lushly planted zone of verdant grasses and nut-bearing trees is ensuring a supply of fresh water, not to mention good soil. While much of Governors Island is a mound of solid granite, much like Manhattan, this southern portion is composed of landfill. Dig a hole just a few feet beneath the surface and it will begin to fill with brackish water from the harbor—not an ideal condition for supporting the 55 species of trees from the oak-hickory forest family that will occupy the grove.

West 8 solved this problem by raising the level of the island. In part this is being accomplished with fill made from the rubble of the island's demolished structures. The other part is lots of good quality topsoil, bought on the market and imported to the site to serve as the park's chief growing medium. This solution also allowed the architects to sculpt the landscape, creating undulations in the earth that frame selected views, such as to the Statue of Liberty, or to Lower Manhattan. In a future phase of construction, fill will be used to sculpt high hills from the top of which visitors will be able to obtain 360-degree views, ascertaining once and for all that they are indeed on

Clockwise from top, left: Hammock Grove, Soissons Landing, Liggett Terrace, the Play Lawn.

an island.

All of this new planting will require irrigation. Governors Island is being linked to the city's water system with a pipe from Brooklyn as part of this first phase of construction. In part, that potable water will be used to feed the thirsty fledgling plant life, which will take a generation to reach maturity. But West 8 is also employing good storm water management practices that will ensure that the rain that falls on the island will remain in its soil to feed the greenery, rather than be directed out into the harbor via sewers. Permeable catch basins throughout the site will collect storm water and feed it slowly into the deep soil, where, thanks to hydrological phenomena, it will form a separate stratum from the underlying seawater. **AS**

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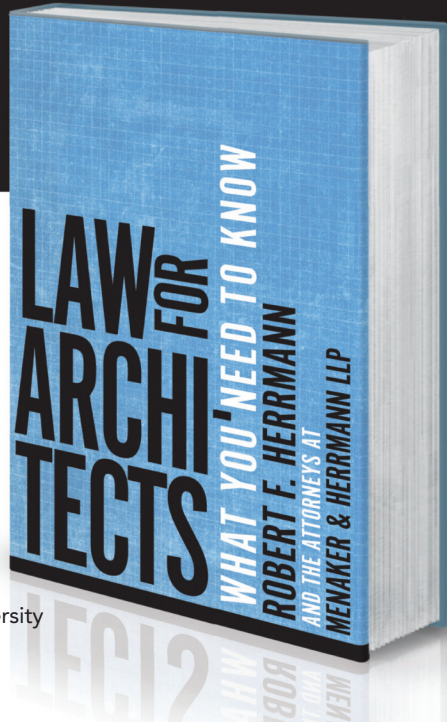
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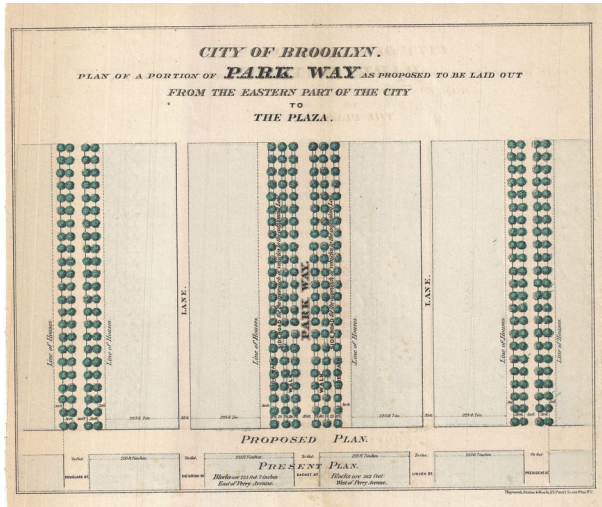
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COURTESY PROSPECT PARK ALLIANCE

BROOKLYN'S EASTERN PARKWAY RESTORED BY CITY, FEDS

Polishing the Necklace

When the renovation of Brooklyn's Eastern Parkway is completed next spring, 15 years will have passed since parkway resident Marge Louer started a petition to restore and update the Olmsted/Vaux-designed median at the head of this old Brooklyn avenue. With paving and benches due in by Thanksgiving, the project is nearly complete. The grand finale will be the spring tree planting. "It is so much better. It is

how it should have looked when it was changed in the 1920s to put in the subway," said former Prospect Park Alliance President Tupper Thomas. In 1998, Louer reached out to Thomas to take on the project. "We worked with the community to come up with a design and a cost," recalled Thomas. "Council Member James Davis was going to fund it, but he was killed before he could," referring to

the city councilman who was fatally shot in 2003. Subsequently, the Eastern Parkway project failed to win council funding. Cultural organizations along the decrepit Parkway took the initiative themselves to spruce up the area. The Brooklyn Public Library was renovated; the Brooklyn Botanic Garden reaffirmed its stature, with a new entrance by the former Polshek Partnership and a visitor center by Weiss Manfredi; and the Brooklyn Museum of Art likewise boosted its image as Brooklyn's high-end community center, with a sweeping new glass entrance and public plaza, also by Polshek. Ultimately, at the request of then-then Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg provided the \$4 million needed, but the scope of the project soon expanded to include a new roadbed, significant roadway alterations, and replacement of the vintage-1880 sewer pipes. In the end, an acronym soup of agencies had their hands in the project: DDC, DOT, DPR, DEP, MTA, and the Landmarks Commission, as well as the Design Commission. The final tally came in at over \$18.6

million, with funding from not only the city but federal sources, including earmarks by the now former U.S. Rep. Major Owens. Stimulus funding ultimately closed the gap. Like everything Olmsted touched, Eastern Parkway instantly gained national significance when it was constructed in the 1870s. Along with Ocean Parkway, it was part of Olmsted's vision of a contiguous greenway connecting Prospect Park and smaller neighborhood parks with the city's more bucolic edges. Using the boulevards of Paris as a model, the design for the parkway would accommodate ribbons of transportation: pedestrians, bikes, and carriages that would drive under a canopy of trees. Because the roadway was predicted to be heavily used, the roadbed itself was made of durable macadam, recently invented by a Scottish engineer but still not widely used in the 1870s. Flashing forward to present day, the new median has been redesigned to better accommodate today's transportation choices. The service road has been narrowed and the median itself widened to allow for an

ample bike lane. That path is sited at a higher elevation, setting it off from the busy roadway. A westbound lane of traffic was eliminated to allow for pedestrian islands at crosswalks. At Washington Avenue, the median has been lengthened to make crossings shorter. Pedestrian signage has also been installed at this busy intersection, where drivers are often spatially disoriented because of the wide expanse created by the service road that flanks the northern side. In addition to transportation safety measures, historic lampposts have been installed. DDC anticipates that the benches—the Central Park Settee, designed in the style of Olmsted's parks—and plaques commemorating fallen World War I soldiers will be in place by Thanksgiving. (At some point the 100-plus plaques were removed and some were lost. Reproductions are being installed for the missing ones.) While the Eastern Parkway project nods to the past, its traffic improvements and landscape innovations also make it modern. Hexagonal asphalt pavers were recently installed, leaving residents

concerned that the neighborhood was being returned to a "same-old/ same-old" ambiance. Specifically, the 1920s pavers put in place following local subway construction became warped and buckled, making walking, let alone pushing a stroller, treacherous. But today's paving system is new and improved, according to Prospect Park Alliance landscape architect Christian Zimmerman, who is the chief designer of the landscape component. A two-foot layer of structural soil was laid first, allowing for compaction; topsoil came next, to allow the tree roots to stretch out. Then came reinforced concrete, in case an errant garbage truck should one day wander onto the median. Greenery is also on its way: Since many of the original trees have died over the years, Zimmerman and his company will soon tag a variety of trees at New York state nurseries for an April planting, including sweet gum, swamp white oak, pink oak, willow oak, and rotundiloba sweetgum. "We are trying not to have a monoculture in hopes of preventing disease," he explained. **BAY BROWN**

STARR WHITEHOUSE

Landscape Architects
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Laura Starr, President of NYASLA, salutes the honorees of the NYASLA President's Dinner:

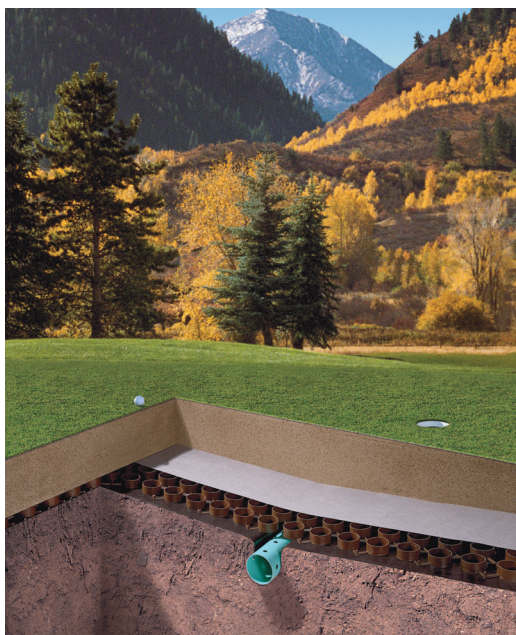
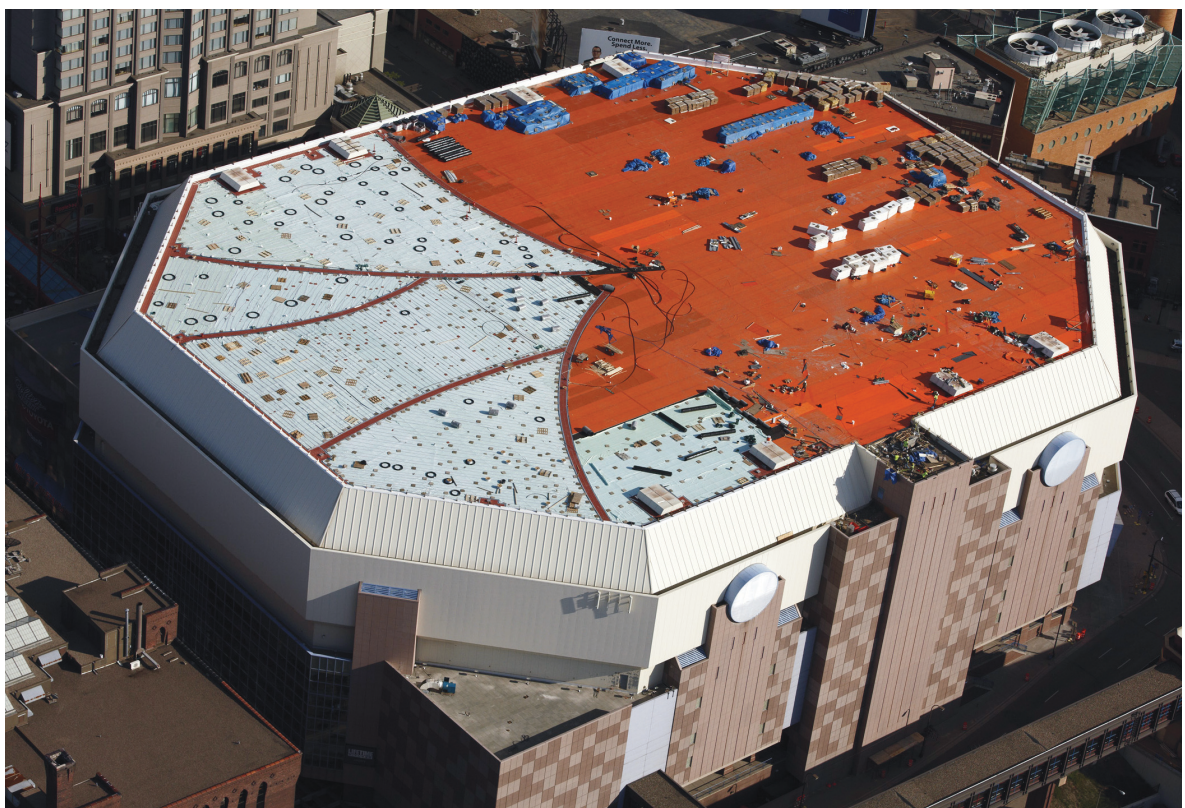
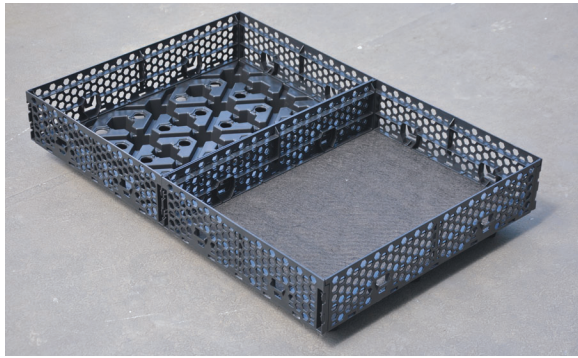
Douglas Blonsky, President & CEO,
Central Park Conservancy
Carter Strickland, Commissioner, New York City
Department of Environmental Protection
The Architect's Newspaper

for their contribution to landscape architecture
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Green roofing and subsurface components to seal out, drain, or retain water. By Perrin Drumm

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1 EXTENSIVE GREEN ROOF SYSTEM GREEN ROOF SOLUTIONS

This four-inch extensive green roof system can absorb 60 percent to 90 percent of a one-inch storm event and can delay runoff of over 6,200 gallons on a 10,000-square-foot roof. Green Roof Solutions also offers electronic leak testing to ensure that your roof is airtight before you begin planting. greenroofsolutions.com

2 BIO-MODULE GREEN INNOVATIONS

This pre-vegetated modular, interlocking green roof system features integrated irrigation, filter fabric, drainage, and water retention. It also comes in a variety of plantings. At 70 liters per square meter, the Shortgrass Meadow option can handle as many as 100 rainy events per year. greenroofs.us

3 SUPER PERVIOUS PAVERS XERIPAVE

With a flow-through rate that exceeds 5,000 inches per hour, Xeripave's line of super-pervious pavers is suitable for both residential and commercial projects. Storm water is captured and transported to the underlying base of rock where the volume of water is stored, allowing for slower infiltration into the soil below. xeripave.com

4 G476 WATERPROOFING MEMBRANE SIKA SARNAFIL

Sika Sarnafil's bright orange flagship product is made from specially formulated fiberglass-reinforced thermoplastic that is highly puncture-proof and remains watertight in even the harshest buried environments, resisting high alkalinity, fungi, and bacteria. It also comes in a self-adhesive, foam-backed version. usa.sarnafil.sika.com

5 GREEN ROOF BLOCKS GREEN ROOF BLOCKS

The Green Roof Block system is a completely self-contained module made from high-grade anodized aluminum. It can be pre-planted with a growth medium that the company guarantees will never break down. Built-in drainage and convenient handles make the units easy to install. greenroofblocks.com

6 EXTENSIVE MC ROOFLITE

This extensive green roof growing medium features a precisely balanced blend of lightweight mineral aggregates and organic components, such as USCC STA-approved compost. Used at Brooklyn Grange and the new Barclays Center, it works in very shallow systems and can drain and retain water simultaneously. rooflitesoil.com

7 DRAINCORE² INVISIBLE STRUCTURES

These high-volume geocomposite drainage and conveyance layers can be configured for site-specific flow volumes for advanced subsurface and green roof applications. The drainage core is wrapped in a geotextile fabric that allows water in from any direction and can distribute 42 gallons of water per minute per foot width. invisiblestructures.com

8 DRAINAGE BOARD FOAM SEDUM MASTER

Made from 100 percent recycled cross-link, closed cell polyethylene foam with no foreign additives, this mold-resistant, specially blended Drainage Board Foam is bonded with PET filter fabrics and acts as a drainage layer, insulation, and water retention system all in one. sedummaster.com

COURTESY RESPECTIVE MANUFACTURERS



1



5



4



2



3

COURTESY RESPECTIVE MANUFACTURERS

Going Public

Landscape furniture made from centuries old and brand new sustainable sources.

By Perrin Drumm

1 MAPLE-PILE BENCH KORNEGAY

Four wide slats of FSC-certified red maple are stacked around a powder-coated frame and legs in a thermally-modified series that includes short- and long-form seating. Thermal modification is a safe, chemical-free process that renders the wood repellent to both moisture and insects and adds to its overall stability and longevity.
kornegaydesign.com

2 BOARDWALK BENCH NICHE FORMS+SURFACES

The 142-year-old reclaimed FSC-certified Cumaru hardwood is repurposed from the original slats of the Atlantic City Boardwalk and arranged in an asymmetrical pattern to salvage as much wood as possible while trimming imperfections. The naturally oiled seat comes in a range of fully recyclable aluminum frames.
forms-surfaces.com

3 BEVEL BENCH SITU URBAN ELEMENTS

Made from TAKTL ultra high-performance concrete (UHPC) in a low-impact manufacturing process that uses 92 percent raw, local materials, Bevel is one of only a few fully recyclable public seating options available. The mirrored front and back pieces are shipped nested to minimize transportation costs, and the natural finish requires minimal maintenance.
situ-urban.com

4 SCB1600 BENCH MAGLIN

The solid aluminum frame finished with Maglin's powder-coating system supports a bench made from Ipe wood or high-density paper composite (HDPC), an increasingly common high-quality alternative to hardwoods made from 100 percent FSC-certified, post-consumer recycled content with a range of LEED credits.
maglin.com

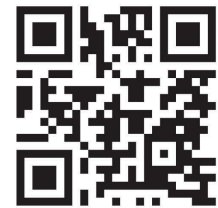
5 T-SERIES SITECRAFT

While the Rosenwach Group is perhaps better known for its water tanks, which dot the New York City skyline, the hundred-year-old family-owned company applies the same quality woodworking to public furniture through its landscaping company, Sitecraft. The thin slats and natural finish of the T-Series benches are durable and classic, perfect for heavy-traffic sites like Hudson River Park.
site-craft.com

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Boston City Hall's vast plaza.

EZRA STOLLER/ESTO

CONTEMPORARY LANDSCAPE INTERVENTIONS ARE TRANSFORMING MIDCENTURY BUILDINGS AND PLAZAS TO ADDRESS THEIR URBANISTIC FAILINGS AND REPOSITION THESE SPACES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF TODAY. BY ALEX ULAM

SOFTENING MODERNISM'S HARD EDGE

Inserting a work of contemporary landscape architecture into the context of a mid-century modernist complex is a challenging proposition. Many of the most prominent plazas, pocket parks, and courtyards from the modernist era feature stark and austere designs that were intended to complement the buildings they were built to serve.

Some renowned modernist spaces such as the Spartan granite plaza in front of Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building were not even designed with the intention that people would linger. "When Mies van der Rohe saw people sitting on the ledges, he was surprised," Phillip Johnson is said to have commented. "He never dreamed they would."

Certainly the sensibility of the typical mid-century modernist urban landscape is at

odds with contemporary tastes and activities. The greenery was designed to be sparse and ordered. Restrooms, cafes, and shade structures are nowhere to be found. Nowadays, however, urban open spaces are designed for people to linger. The reigning design approach calls for populated plazas, a variety of seating options, cafes, shade trees, and lawns where people can relax.

Indeed, many public plazas from the modernist era, such as Dan Kiley's North Court at Lincoln Center in New York City and Lawrence Halprin's Skyline Park in Denver, Colorado, have been redesigned to conform to the contemporary program. And although nobody has proposed inserting a lawn and trees into the Seagram Building Plaza, some say that the current open space redesign

juggernaut is threatening to eradicate an important part of the country's architectural history.

"We have a thing now about using every square inch, which is not an awful idea, but it might not always be necessary," said Frank Sanchis, program director of United States Programs at the World Monuments Fund.

In 2004, when Sanchis was vice-president of New York City's Municipal Art Society, he helped organize a high-profile competition for the redesign of a dilapidated one-acre elevated plaza at 55 Water Street in lower Manhattan; the plaza originally was designed in the early 1970s by landscape architecture firm M. Paul Friedberg & Associates. The winners of the competition, Rogers Marvel Architects and Ken Smith Landscape Architect,

completely redesigned the place with an artificial lawn and a diverse selection of plantings.

However, in retrospect, doing away with the Friedberg design may have been a mistake, said Sanchis. "Simply replacing its original design, rather than reinventing it, might have worked perfectly well," Sanchis said. "I don't think that we ever looked to see what Paul Friedberg's design originally looked like—it might have been perfectly fine."

Much of the credit for the reawakening of interest in the preservation of modernist landscape architecture can be tied to Charles Birnbaum, president of the Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF). In 2008, TCLF came out with a Marvels of Modernism list to call attention to dozens of significant post-war landscapes that had been allowed to fall into



disrepair and were threatened with destruction.

Birnbaum says that his campaign was created to encourage sensitive renovations that respect the original design intent of landscape architecture masterworks. "So it is not just about people lying on the lawn, it is not about having a space with a dog park," Birnbaum said. "We are trying to give people the information so that we can manage change. It is about understanding how a particular masterwork fits in with the history of design."

Many New Yorkers were introduced to the thorny issues surrounding the preservation of works of modernist landscape architecture several years ago, when a controversy erupted over the renovation of the North Court at Lincoln Center.

The North Court was considered a masterwork by renowned landscape architect Dan Kiley. This outdoor temple, situated in front of Eero Saarinen's Vivian Beaumont Theater, was once one of the most serene sites in the city. It was a geometrically-ordered place that featured half a dozen benches surrounding a shallow reflecting pool that contained sculptor Henry Moore's *Reclining Figure*. The landscape's geometry complemented the surrounding exteriors of Wallace Harrison's Metropolitan Opera Building and Max Abramovitz's Avery Fisher Hall.

Although aspects of Kiley's design remain, thanks to a redesign by Diller Scofidio + Renfro, today it is an altogether different setting. The size of the reflecting pool has been reduced and the distinctive travertine

planters removed. In keeping with the contemporary agenda of activating urban spaces, the court is bounded by a restaurant that features a sloping green lawn on its roof where people can sunbathe in the summer.

Preservationists such as Birnbaum and Sanchis were appalled by the North Court's redesign. "By designing a simpler restaurant than the one that Diller designed with the sloping roof, they might have been able to keep the severe aspect of the landscape that goes with the severity of the Beaumont Theater," Sanchis said. "They could have downplayed the spirit of Dan Kiley's design, but they wiped it out—which I think is happening with a lot of landscapes from that period."

The design community is still divided

OLIN's redesign of Anthony J. Celebrezze Federal Building Plaza in Cleveland.

over whether Kiley's design for the North Court could have been updated in such a way as to appease the preservationists and accommodate Lincoln Center's programming. However, the conditions at other modernist-era plazas certainly call for substantial overhauls.

One example is the Anthony J. Celebrezze Federal Building Plaza in Cleveland, originally designed in the 1960s atop an underground parking garage. For more than four decades, the place was an elevated windswept plaza that did not connect with the rest of the city and was largely devoid of human activity. The plaza was comprised of geometrically-



A new quad at SUNY Albany by Thomas Balsley Associates.

ordered planes of grass interspersed with paving. Most of the design intent was oriented toward complementing the 32-story office building that it serves.

As happens with many modernist plazas built atop garages, this one developed severe drainage problems. A 2004 renovation by the landscape architecture firm OLIN fixed the leaks and used the opportunity to better connect the plaza with the rest of the city. The architects made the plaza more comfortable, with bosques of trees and grading that help block the 30-mile-per-hour winds that frequently assault the place. Rather than eradicate the plaza's original composition, the designers incorporated it into a new, sinuous landscape that they laid on top of the old one.

"There are lots of games going on, which are about using the modern grid and then varying it to create a space that people can occupy," said Richard Newton, a partner in OLIN. "It is something people can use rather than something that is only a visual complement to the building. We learned a lot from William Whyte and what he brought to design."

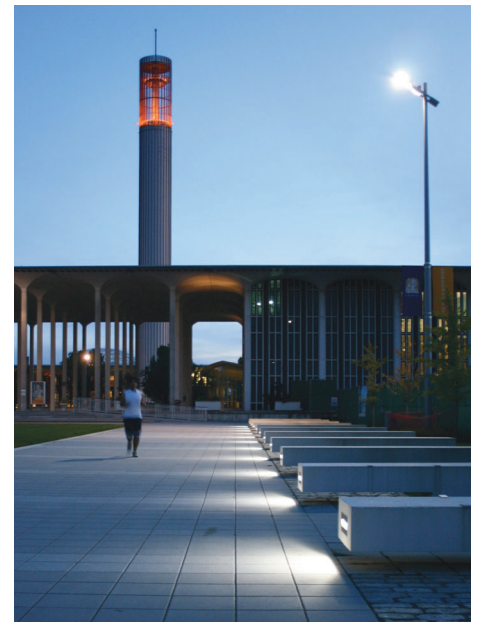
For the State University of New York at Albany, Edward Durell Stone masterplanned and designed the buildings at a grand scale. Many traditional campus gathering places were omitted in favor of little-used ceremonial spaces like a mammoth motor court at the



entrance. Thomas Balsley Associates is working on a landscape masterplan for the campus, and recently converted the cobble stone motor court into a new two and a half acre lawn quadrangle with an interactive fountain at the center. The lawn is flanked with over-scaled slab benches with integrated lighting to illuminate the pathways. "Many of the spaces were impressive, very modernist, but not very human," said principal Thomas Balsley. "You didn't feel like you were part of the story." Balsley respected the scale and grandeur of Stone's design, but was

tasked with creating a more inviting space for students and faculty. "We gave them the softening and flexibility they needed," he said. "In the context of that ensemble, it does harmonize with the scale."

Private developers are also using contemporary landscape strategies to add value to midcentury properties. Shorenstein Properties asked HM White Site Architects to create a new outdoor space on top of a setback at the 17th floor of 850 Third Avenue, a 1960s-era Emery Roth office building, which would serve as small meeting areas as well



as a pleasant view for the interior offices. The landscape architects designed a false topography of native grasses and wildflowers, which is visible to most of the workers on the floor. "It creates a natural presence on the building that is a strong contrast to the mid-century architecture," said Aaron Booher, an associate principal at HM White.

Another example of a dysfunctional modernist landscape is Boston's vast City Hall Plaza. Known as the "brick desert," the plaza is one of the most widely disliked places in Beantown. "The public hates this place;





A prairie inspired green roof in Midtown by HM White Site Architects.



they just hate it,” said Birnbaum, who put the place on TCLF’s Marvels of Modernism list. “This is what happens with a lot of these landscapes when they are not taken care of.”

Boston City Hall Plaza reflects an approach to urban planning that is antithetical to contemporary notions of what a city’s center is supposed to look like. The 11-acre expanse of brick and concrete was designed in the 1960s as part of a 60-acre urban renewal scheme that centralized many of Boston’s federal, state, and city buildings into Government Center, a massive Brutalist complex of buildings.

Some older residents resent Government Center because of what it replaced: a lively, although dilapidated hub known as Scollay Square. The place once bustled with commercial activity and was distinguished by grand theaters dating from the early nineteenth century. But by the 1950s the place had become a bar-crawling nightlife

district, and instead of Shakespeare, the theaters featured striptease acts and slapstick vaudeville shows.

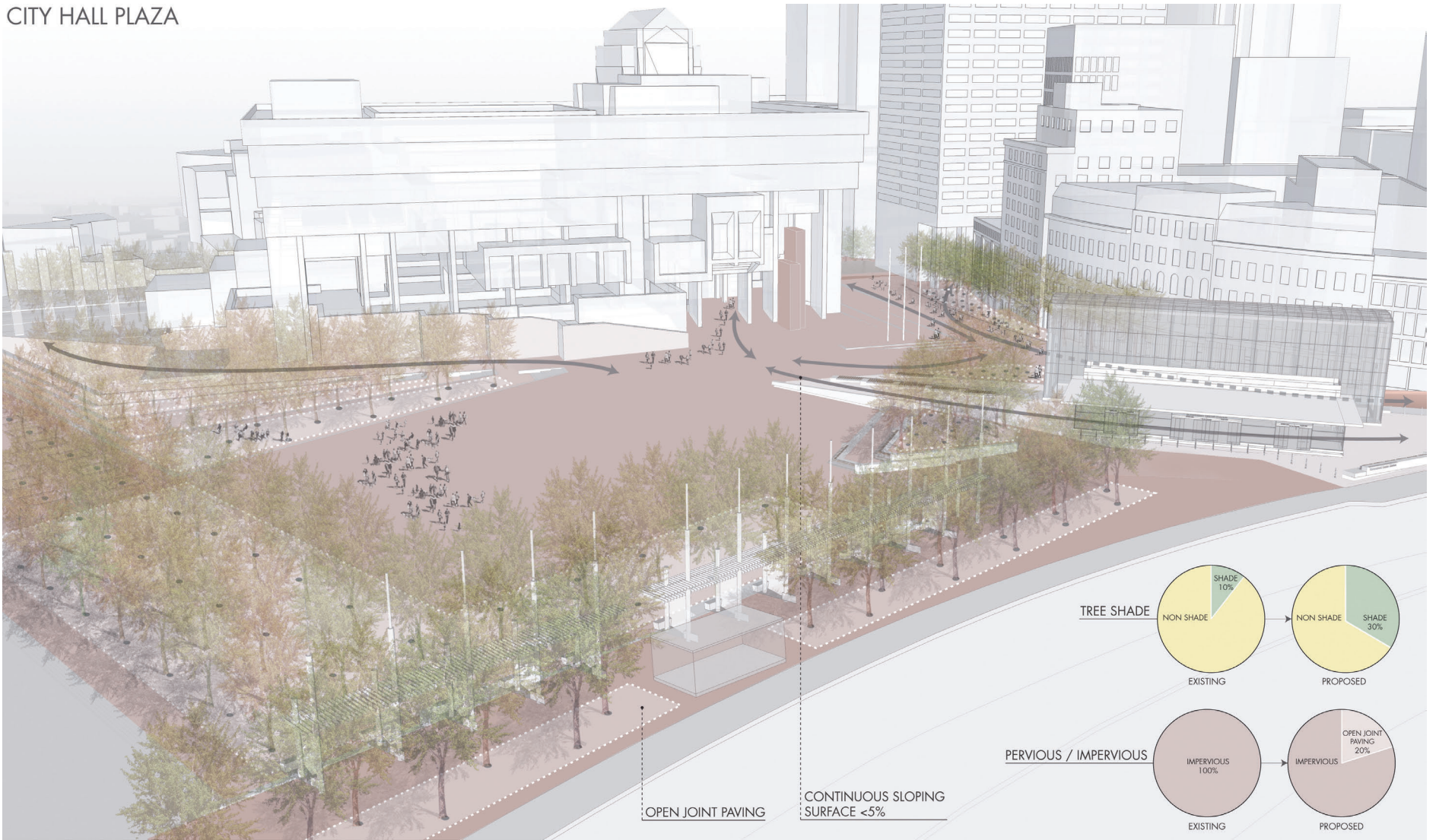
The master plan for Government Center—by I.M. Pei—succeeded in getting rid of the riffraff. But the Brutalist-style buildings and the plaza’s severe design, which was modeled after the Piazza del Campo in Sienna, Italy, also succeeded in getting rid of everyone else.

Today, unless one has business at one of the government buildings on the plaza or there is an event, such as the farmer’s market that moves in twice a week, there is little reason to linger there. This windswept expanse is largely devoid of greenery. There are no shade structures and no seating. When it rains, the plaza’s inadequate drainage system overflows, leaving large puddles throughout. And traversing the plaza’s 26-foot grade change involves negotiating innumerable staircases.

Over the years, a slew of proposals have



CITY HALL PLAZA



suggested how to redesign City Hall Plaza. To the alarm of preservationists such as Birnbaum, many of them have called for dramatic change. One put forth in the 1990s featured a hotel in front of the federal building and a big lawn smack in the middle of the “brick desert.”

It now appears that a more viable plan is on the table courtesy of Greening America’s Capitals, a new federal initiative that is a joint program of the EPA-HUD-DOT Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The initiative led to a plan designed by Utile, Reed Hilderbrand, Durand & Anastas Environmental Strategies, and Nitsch Engineering. The plan is oriented toward mitigating the harsh manmade conditions

of the plaza with many of the landscape strategies that society has come to demand from contemporary public spaces.

The proposed plan features bosques of trees discretely placed to provide summer shade and reduce the heat-island effect. It also improves pedestrian and bicycle access by providing grade changes in places to replace some of the many staircases. In addition, the plan calls for replacing the plaza’s decrepit drainage system with a modern one that captures stormwater runoff and keeps it on site, instead of allowing it to run into the harbor.

One of the most important aspects of the team’s vision for City Hall Plaza is that, “it is a plan for adaptation, not a redesign,” said

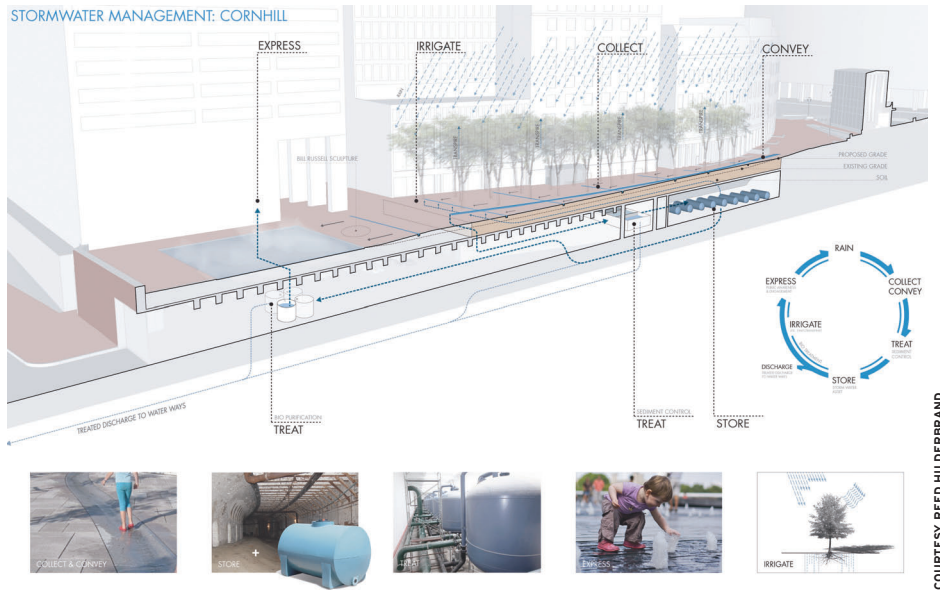
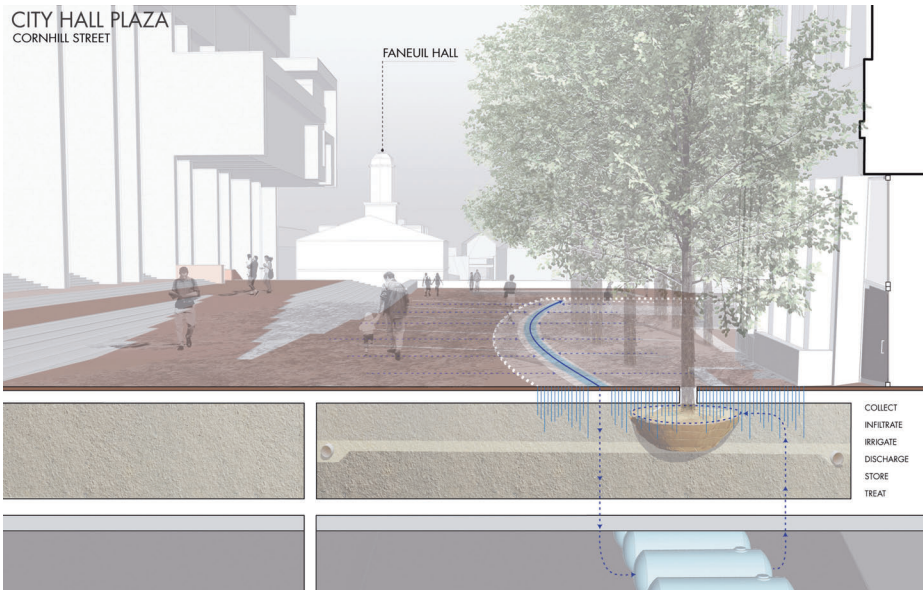
Hilderbrand. The design embraces the plaza’s Brutalist aesthetic by preserving its vast expanse of bricks. In fact, although the plan calls for new bosques of trees at grade level, thanks to structural soils, there will be no tree grates. The bricks will come right up to the trunks of the trees.

Hilderbrand argues that the modernist aesthetic of Government Center deserves to be preserved because of its historic importance. “Government Center was conceived at a time of renewal, and we now have 60 years of legacy here,” he said. “Our cultural imprint from this place represents a mid-century way of re-conceiving a relationship between the people of the city and their government, and I am not really so keen on eradicating it.”

The proposed alterations to Boston City Hall Plaza by Utile and Reed Hilderbrand.

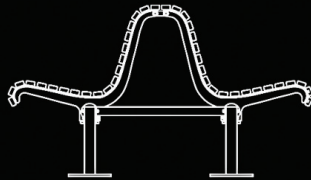
The plan that Hildebrand and his team have developed has won kudos from Birnbaum, who sees it as a model for resuscitating neglected modernist landscape masterworks. “The concept behind city hall and the plaza was a synergistic relationship, but it didn’t really function on a human scale,” he said, adding, “What Gary is doing with these insertions is really reinforcing the design intent, by bringing some humanity to the place.”

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OCTOBER

WEDNESDAY 31

LECTURE
Urban Design and Regulatory Limitations: The Future of Zoning, Land Use, and Its Impact on the Public Domain
1:00 p.m.
Avery Hall
1172 Amsterdam Ave.
events.gsapp.org

TOURS

Augmented Exhibition Tour
Gallery R'Pure
3 East 19th St.
aiany.org

Archtober Building of the Day:
Poe Park Visitor Center
12:00 p.m.
2640 Grand Concourse, Bronx
archtober.org

NOVEMBER

THURSDAY 1

LECTURES
Greg Lindsay, Aerotropolis: The Way We'll Live Next
Boston Society of Architects
290 Congress St.
Boston, MA
architects.org

Keller Easterling: Extrastatecraft
6:00 p.m.
Parsons The New School For Design
25 East 13th St.
newschool.edu

Long Island Modernism 1930–1980 Book Talk with Caroline Rob Zaleski
6:00 p.m.
The Center for Architecture
531 LaGuardia Pl.
aiany.org

WORKSHOP
25 Architects Series: Modern Insertion in Historic Fabric
12:00 p.m.
District Architecture Center
421 7th St., NW
Washington, DC
aiadc.com

FRIDAY 2
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Beatrix Potter: The Picture Lectures
The Morgan Library and Museum
225 Madison Ave.
themorgan.org

Elements of Design: Artists Imagine Chemistry
6:00 p.m.
AIGA Philadelphia SPACE
72 North 2nd St.
Philadelphia, PA
aigaphilly.org

EVENT
AIADC 125th Birthday Party
6:30 p.m.
District Architecture Center
421 7th St., NW
Washington, DC
aiadc.com

SATURDAY 3

EXHIBITION OPENING
Cory Arcangel: Masters
Carnegie Museum of Art
4400 Forbes Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA
web.cmoa.org

LECTURE
Edith Wharton at Home
11:00 a.m.
National Building Museum
401 F St. NW
Washington, DC
nbm.org

WITH THE KIDS
Design a School of the Future
11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.
The Center for Architecture
531 LaGuardia Place
aiany.org

The Imaginary Museum
The New Museum
235 Bowery
newmuseum.org

SUNDAY 4

TOUR
Official NYC Architectural Boat Tour
2:00 p.m.
Chelsea Piers
Pier 62 and Hudson River
zerve.com

MONDAY 5
LECTURES
Pratt Fashion on 14th: Fashion and Architecture with Yeohlee Teng
6:00 p.m.
Pratt Institute
144 West 14th St.
pratt.edu

Walter Annenberg Annual Lecture: Sarah Sze
7:00 p.m.
The Whitney Museum of American Art
945 Madison Ave.
whitney.org

TUESDAY 6
LECTURE
Tod Williams & Billie Tsien
6:30 p.m.
New York Institute of Technology
1871 Broadway
nyit.edu

WEDNESDAY 7
FILM SCREENINGS
Unfinished Spaces
6:30 p.m.
District Architecture Center
7th St. NW
Washington, DC
aiadc.com

Women in the Dirt
7:00 p.m.
Historic Ambler Theater
100 East Butler Ave.
Ambler, PA
www.padeasla.org

LECTURE
Regina Lee Blaszczyk Book Talk: The Color Revolution
6:30 p.m.
The Skyscraper Museum
39 Battery Pl.
skyscraper.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Trisha Baga: Plymouth Rock 2
The Whitney Museum of American Art
945 Madison Ave.
whitney.org

Damage: No Longer Art: Salvage Art Institute
6:30 p.m.
Arthur Ross Architecture Gallery
1172 Amsterdam Ave.
events.gsapp.org

SEMINAR
Control This! 2012
11:00 a.m.
The Metropolitan Pavilion
125 West 18th St.
controlthis.org

THURSDAY 8
LECTURES
Landscape Lectures: Marta Schwartz
7:00 p.m.
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum
280 The Fenway
Boston, MA
gardnermuseum.org

Paper to Platinum: The Collaborative Design of the Brooklyn Navy Yard Center at BLDG 92
6:00 p.m.
The Center for Architecture
531 LaGuardia Pl.
aiany.org

William Massie: Surf Ace
6:00 p.m.
Parsons The New School For Design
25 East 13th St.
newschool.edu

Conversations in Context at The Glass House
Hosted by Murray Moss
Francois de Menil
5:30 p.m.
The Glass House
199 Elm St., New Canaan, CT
philipjohnsonglasshouse.org

Landscape and Confrontation
7:00 p.m.
Weaver Auditorium
The University of Rhode Island
45 Upper College Rd.
Kingston, RI
uri.edu

TOUR
CEU Hanover Pavers
12:00 p.m.
Potomac Yard Park
2401 Potomac Ave.
Alexandria, VA
potomacasla.org

SEMINAR
Designing for Steel, Session #3: Case Studies
12:00 p.m.
District Architecture Center
421 7th St., NW
Washington, DC
aiadc.com

FRIDAY 9
EXHIBITION OPENING
Gabriel Orozco: Asterisms
The Guggenheim
1071 5th Ave.
guggenheim.org

SYMPOSIUM

The City That Never Was
9:00 a.m.
Scholastic Auditorium
547 Broadway
archleague.org

SATURDAY 10
WITH THE KIDS

Archikids
10:30 a.m.
The Skyscraper Museum
39 Battery Pl.
skyscraper.org

TOUR
Heritage for the 21st Century
10:00 a.m.
Church of the Holy Sepulchre
1400 Quincy St., NW
Washington, DC
aiadc.com

MONDAY 12
LECTURE
Oculus Book Talk: Jeff Speck, Walkable City
6:00 p.m.
The Center for Architecture
531 LaGuardia Pl.
aiany.org

SYMPOSIUM
Boom & Bust: Impact of Energy Extraction on Local Communities
8:00 a.m.
Duquesne University Power Center
600 Forbes Ave.
Pittsburg, PA
pittsburgh.center.psu.edu

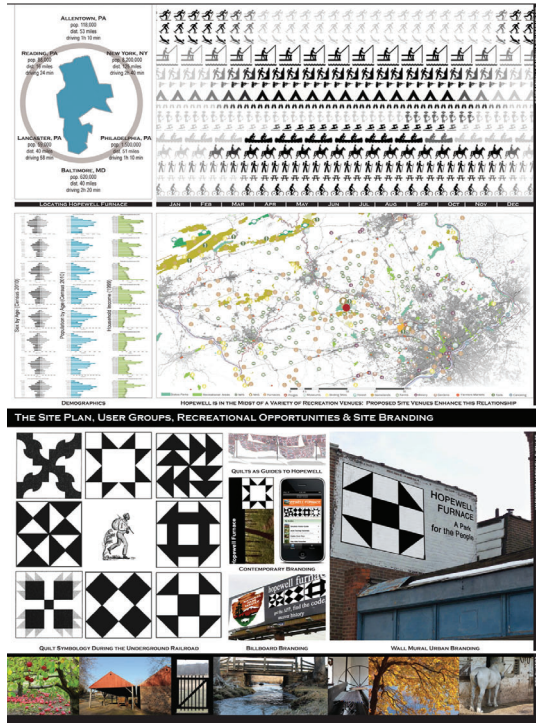
TUESDAY 13
DISCUSSION
Wounded Warrior Home Project
6:30 p.m.
National Building Museum
401 F St. NW
Washington, DC
nbm.org

WEDNESDAY 14
TRADE SHOW
Enterprise Lighting EXPO 2012
11:00 a.m.
Metropolitan Pavilion
125 West 18th St.
enterels.com

EXHIBITION OPENING
Modern Lab: The Box as Form, Structure, and Container
National Gallery of Art
4th and Constitution Ave. NW
Washington, DC
nga.org

CONFERENCE
abx ArchitectureBoston Expo
12:00 p.m.
Boston Convention Center
415 Summer St.
Boston, MA
abexpo.com

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PARKS FOR THE PEOPLE
The Octagon Museum
1799 New York Ave. NW, Washington, D.C.
Through November 30

Parks for the People presents student ideas of how to reimagine our national parks as natural, social, and cultural destinations. Teams from City College of New York, Rutgers, Cornell, Florida International University, Kansas State, Pratt, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Washington competed in a semester long studio, engaging questions of the preservation, sustainability, accessibility, and technology in 21st century national parks. The National Parks Service, Van Alen Institute, and the National Parks Conservation Association sponsored the competition, which ultimately declared the teams from City College, for their work on the Nicodemus National Historic Site in Kansas, and Rutgers, for their project at the Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site in Pennsylvania (above), the winners. All seven entries, each representing a different region of the country, will be on view at the Octagon Museum in Washington, D.C.



EDGELESS SCHOOL
Center for Architecture
536 LaGuardia Place
Through January 19, 2013

Edgeless School investigates how technology is changing education and how architecture itself is changing as a result. The exhibition takes a look at 19 newly completed schools throughout the country (eight are in New York City and the majority of the rest are in the Pacific Northwest) and sorts them by their degree of “edgelessness.” The Ethical Culture Fieldston Middle School in the Bronx, for example, softens the distinction between the built environment and nature by embracing outdoor space and using a connection with nature as an educational tool. The L.B. Landry High School in New Orleans, LA, on the other hand, blurs conventional distinctions between constituencies by encouraging students, educators, parents, and architects to work together to create a building that is designed to further the school’s pedagogical goals.

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER OCTOBER 31, 2012

ROOM WITH A VIEW

Discovering Columbus
Columbus Circle
Through November 18, 2012



COURTESY THE PUBLIC ART FUND

What if your living room were six stories high with views of Central Park, midtown north, and Broadway slicing the Upper West Side towards Lincoln Center? How would you decorate the space? If you're the Japanese artist Tatzu Nishi, you would put a thirteen-foot tall marble figure in the center and surround it with a sectional sofa, book-lined shelves, and a flat-screen TV.

Actually the sequence was the other way around: Nishi has wrapped a domestic architectural

space around the existing statue that crowns Gaetano Russo's 1892 Christopher Columbus monument on 59th Street. In *Discovering Columbus*, commissioned by the Pubic Art Fund, visitors climb six flights of stairs above madding crowds and circling traffic to step into a strangely intimate room perched high above Central Park like an urban tree house.

Discovering Columbus instantly toys with our sense of scale. We're now confronted, up close, with a

familiar object we've scurried past, 70 feet below, and not paid much heed. With his swaggering hand-on-hip stance, defiant but aloof gaze, horned cap and flowing garments, Columbus is a giant we're meeting in person for the first time. He seems to want to join the parade of pop-cultural icons—Elvis, the Empire State Building, Mickey Mouse, McDonalds—stamped on the surrounding pink wallpaper.

Furnishings selected by the artist with the help of Bloomingdale's and

Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams evoke a comfy, colorful sitting room with burgundy velvet curtains, purple sofas, framed pictures, vases, lamps, side tables, with Columbus himself perched on a black coffee table.

We're privileged to share a vantage Columbus has enjoyed for over a century. To the north, the Trump International Hotel & Tower and the silver Unisphere splits Broadway from Central Park West, to the east, 59th Street abuts Central Park South, to the west is the Time

Above: The inetrior of *Discovering Columbus*.

Warner Center, while to the south, Brad Cloepfil's Museum of Art & Design places the restaurant Robert at eye level. As a bonus, climbing the six flights of stairs provides a rare close-up of bronze ships' prows and anchors that make their way up the granite column.

The scaffolding supporting the stairwell is **continued on page 29**

ECOLOGY OF MEANS

Treading Softly: Paths to Ecological Order
Thomas Princen
MIT Press, \$23.95

The premise of *Treading Softly: Paths to Ecological Order* by Thomas Princen is that we can write our way into a new future. "It is through language that we see and construct the world...new ideas, new principles, new language for a sustainable world," Princen writes. He presents an approach to writing as a form of language making for a future that can lead to "The New Normal," in which sustainable thinking becomes standard thinking in the same way that writing led to an end to slavery in the nineteenth century.

A professor of social and ecological sustainability at the University of Michigan, Princen is the author of *The Logic of Sufficiency*, an award-winning, 2005 environmental treatise that seems to have contributed at least in part to the heart of his new text.

Here is a "third view" portrayed in stories—vignettes, anecdotes, histories, case studies, a parable, and fanciful dialogue—all of which appear to have been imagined, at least to this reader, in the spirit of Gregory Bateson's multiple modes

of inquiry and rhetorical inventions that were presented in *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*—The 1972 classic in the field of ecology and cybernetics theory.

At a time when Glenn Murcutt and many other architects are proposing that a building should touch the earth lightly, the title *Treading Softly* by itself seems worthy of any reader seeking another approach to the discourse of consumption and expansion that has informed the political literature of the 2012 presidential campaign. Princen asserts: "The story of the twenty first century is a fundamental shift—away from incessant filling of waste sinks and depleting of natural capital and toward fertile soil; clean, free-flowing water; genetic diversity in crops and wildlife; and cultural diversity in peoples and communities. The story of the twenty first century is living

within our means, biophysical and social. It is treading softly on land that can't take much more."

Divided into three sections that lay out the problem, introduce the solution, and offer practical applications for arriving at the new normal, *Treading Softly* brings together teaching stories and an approach to work, love, and play that is grounded in 19th-century idealism and the emergent practices of 20th-century systems and networks analysis. Those old enough to remember Jimmy Carter's cardigan-sweater appeal to turn down the thermostat may be bemused by this "new" proposition. Nevertheless, Princen advocates reductionism as a solution to most of the environmental problems and presents those solutions in an appealing breakdown of categories such as sufficiency, capping, and sourcing. These

categories illustrate the ways in which networks and systems can operate alongside the ideal scenarios Princen presents, such as one about the sufficiency of the lobster fishermen of Monhegan Island.

In the most convincing section of the book, the author divides ecological thinking into "worldviews" of the environment that can shift with the changing fortunes of present conditions. The "Naturist" worldview says that the environment is all about matter and energy and living things, all of which would exist whether humans existed or not. The "Mechanist" view sees the environment as interlocking pieces of atoms and molecules. The "Agrarian" view is interventionist and managerial, involving direct interaction with the land, such as practiced by the lobster fishermen studied in **continued on page 29**

The exterior of *Discovering Columbus*.



COURTESY THE PUBLIC ART FUND

ROOM WITH A VIEW continued from page 28 currently doing double duty, as it also contains platforms used for restoration work on the column. When Nishi's room at the top closes, conservators will use the enclosed space as a studio to complete work on the Columbus statue. This will complete the renovation of Columbus Circle begun in 2005, which has produced a granite plaza with new benches, plantings, perimeter fountains, and reconfigured walkways and crosswalks.

Discovering Columbus is Nishi's latest architectural intervention that involves taking historical monuments and surrounding

them with domestic spaces. Previous works include *Villa Victoria* (2002), a temporarily functioning hotel constructed around a statue of Queen Victoria in Liverpool; *Engel* (2002), a one-room apartment built around a bronze angel weathervane atop a 14th century cathedral in Basel; *Tatzu Nishi: War and peace and in between* (2009–10), featuring two living spaces surrounding equestrian sculptures at the Art Gallery of New South Wales; and *The Merlion Hotel* (2011), a temporary hotel suite built around Singapore's Merlion fountain.

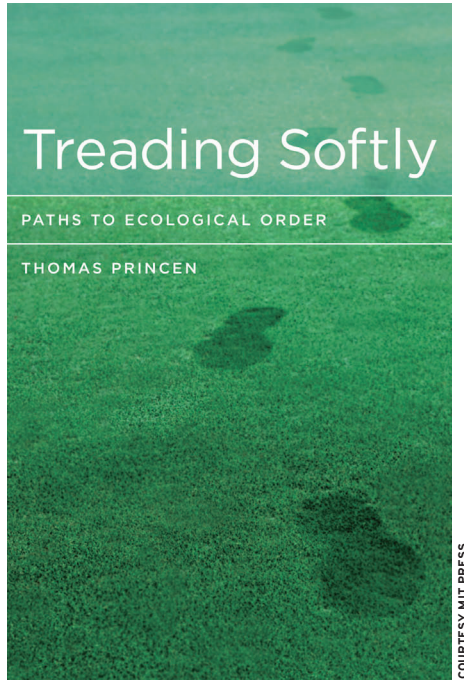
SUSAN MORRIS IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER.

ECOLOGY OF MEANS continued from page 28 the book. In the "Economistic" worldview, everything of concern is reducible to money or hypothetical utilities, and all is substitutable.

These worldviews could have created a lens through which to view a variety of scenarios and to establish a convincing proposition, had the writing in the book been fleshed out to a meet the ambition of the manifesto.

While Bateson offered "steps" to an ecology of mind, Princen's "paths" to treading softly prompted this reader to return to Bateson's steps to see what is possible in language formations of new types of ideas aggregating into minds that are capable of imagining another way of thinking. Writing that can project an idea forward is an advanced form of prose, as anyone who has struggled to write a competition proposal knows. Surely, then, writing can change the ways in which rhetoric is constructed and metaphors deployed—and in this way undo "slavery." For language forms in bits and pieces in the mind before the territory becomes the map, and revised assumptions about speech are formative and epistemological.

Princen's metaphors, which he hopes will excite a reader to share in his passion for the future, are sometimes strained. However, he successfully encourages readers to challenge core assumptions about the construction of words such as "the economy and environment," and to see the ways in which systems and networks might be reimagined and reinvigorated when motivated by a desire to move to an environ-



COURTESY MIT PRESS

mental future that offers plausible scenarios for the way we might live with less. "The aim of this book is to make such living seem possible, even desirable. It is to create images of the possible—images that are realistic when the debts and deferred costs and dependencies are taken into account. It is to imagine a material system, an 'economy,' that is actually *economical* regarding the very resources it rests upon. It is to lay the groundwork for an *ecological order*."

JEFFREY HOGREFE IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ARCHITECTURE AT PRATT INSTITUTE IN BROOKLYN.

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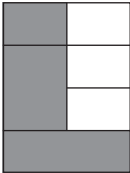
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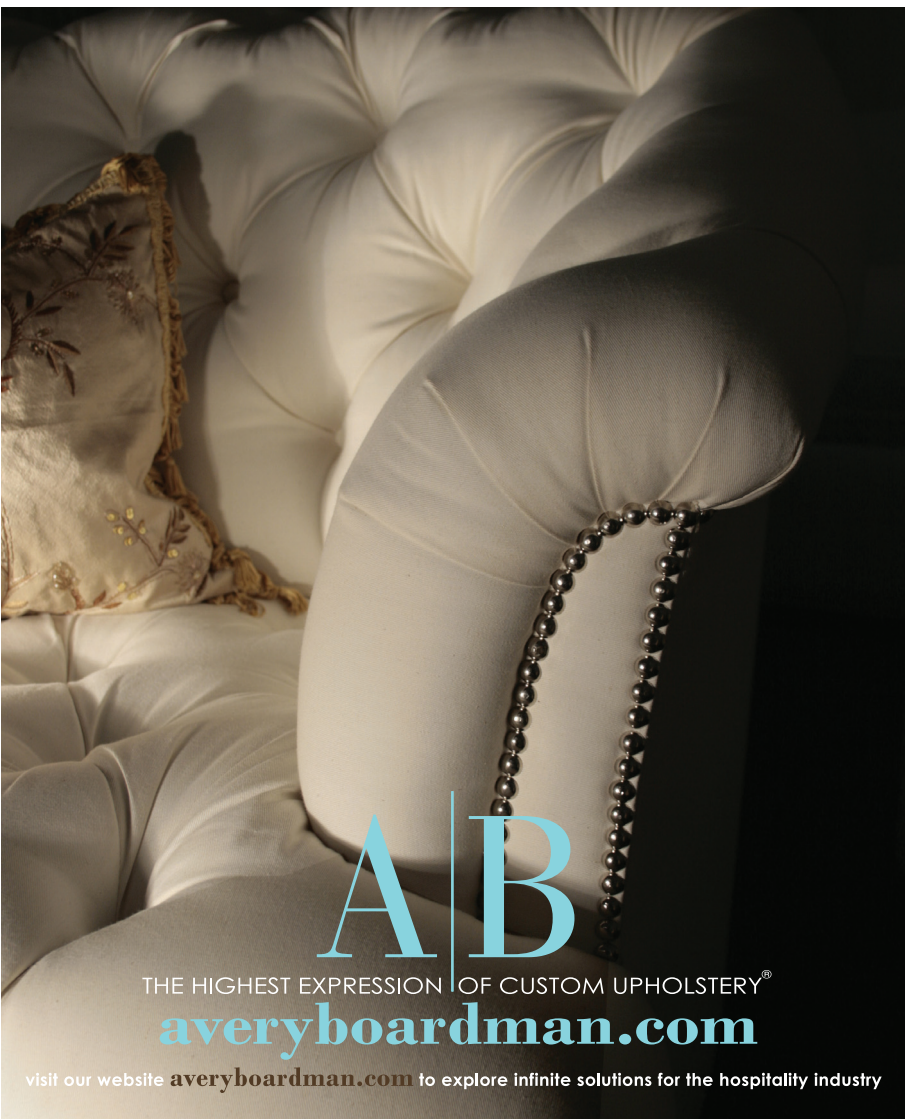
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COURTESY STARR WHITEHOUSE

THE FERTILE FUTURE OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE IN NEW YORK

As the incoming president of ASLA NY, I would like to consider the future of landscape architecture in New York. At the ASLA President's Dinner, on November 1, 2012, we will be honoring Doug Blonsky for his leadership of the Central Park Conservancy, *The Architect's Newspaper* for their efforts in bringing landscape architecture to the forefront of the design community's imagination, and Commissioner Carter Strickland for changing the culture at the DEP in embracing green for the city's infrastructure challenges. I would like to sketch a philosophical and social background against which their accomplishments can be viewed. The biggest question

confronting us in practice is what will happen after the Bloomberg Administration. Mayor Bloomberg set in motion a visionary transformation of the city. Across the board we saw progress: flagship parks, the Design Excellence Program, Janette Sadik Khan's bike lanes, DDC's green buildings, and DEP's decentralization of stormwater management to a vast network of rain absorbing gardens. We need to ensure that this green vision, and its momentum, will be maintained in the post-Bloomberg era.

Certainly the Conservancies and other existing public private partnerships will provide some institutional stability. But, in

addition, I would like to propose a City Green Conservancy modeled on the Central Park Conservancy that would ensure the existence and funding of green jobs and the availability of related training needed to maintain the bioswales, green roofs, and green walls on public buildings; the future High Lines and Low Lines; and the parks beyond the famous flagships that have come into being in the last decade. The Bloomberg legacy is that green spaces should permeate the city at a finer level than had ever been imagined; and thus individual support organizations, like those that support our flagship parks, need to be augmented with

ones that will tend to a new and growing distributed network of green riches.

A second point: There is a general split in how we treat our waterfront improvement. To date we have very urban areas, like Battery Park City, and we have purely natural areas, like Jamaica Bay. This distinction is both generated and reflected by the institutional structures of the city, state, and federal government, which place different agencies in charge of different zones. Yet here we have a great opportunity; the ability to integrate these strands of waterfront vision to the mutual benefit of all in such a way that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Productive parks that manage stormwater could create beautiful ecosystems and nature preserves while draining the streets of surrounding neighborhoods and recharging aquifers. Bushwick Inlet Park could be an ideal spot for this, for example, as could the proposed Gowanus Green project. These productive parks could treat grey water, if properly designed, with no loss of aesthetic value. This would provide a steady source of irrigation for gardens. The reverse is also true. Wetlands and other coastal areas can be made more accessible to people, with boardwalks, appropriate recreational activities such as kayaking, and restaurants carefully integrated into the ecological preserves. New York could thus pioneer a kind of urban ecotourism which would generate a buzz out of proportion to its economic impact. A progressive-minded visitor could stay in a hut on Jamaica Bay in order to kayak or fish during the day and go to the Metropolitan Opera in the evening.

Just as with the High Line, such developments could enhance the prestige and intangible aura of New York. Parks are, in fact, cultural infrastructure with a direct economic impact. A revolutionary step toward realizing these exciting possibilities might be the elimination of some of the boundaries between city agencies, or the instatement of collaborative dialogues between them that could create the same result.

It is fitting that New York should be in the forefront here, for it was Central Park that created the template for such a fusion. Central Park expressed the sense that the vastness of infinite nature, as exhibited in the Hudson River and Luminist Schools of painters, is part of the essential inner life of the American people, and as such should be present in cities for the people's enjoyment. Such a project required far-reaching vision, subtle design, deft political work, and incredibly



broad collaboration—a cooperation of diverse groups in both means and ends; and thus Olmsted is justly regarded as the most seminal figure of landscape architecture. His greatest advance occurred here in New York. The Moses era, however, abandoned this heritage, seeing the New York landscape as merely utilitarian—for transportation or sports, for lawns or paths—and in so doing it dispelled the spirit of the romance of nature, of skillfully controlled messiness, with which Olmsted and Vaux had imbued their creation. Moses envisioned no rich ecological layers, and did not even attempt a simultaneous solution to the problems posed by the many varying requirements of the city and its inner life.

In the last decade, however, the outlines are becoming clear of a possibility that can now be discerned as an extension of the sensibility informing Central Park. It is a vision realized not in one titanic work, nor even in a necklace of parks, but in a *network* of green initiatives, both public and private, informed by an enlightened collaboration of urban interests. Politically it is founded on the new green consciousness of the general public, indeed of the entire world, that is one of the acquisitions of the twenty-first century. And, as can be seen clearly in the case of Olmsted, it is the landscape architect who has the skills to coordinate these collaborations and thus who has the responsibility to combine sophistication and sensitivity in this difficult but rewarding enterprise. Thus a neo-Olmstedian vision is coalescing of nature reclaiming its place in the urban world, and of the urban world opening itself to the infinite breath of nature—on railroad trestles, on facades, in streets and plazas, on roofs—in a distributed network of collaborative projects which cross boundaries to solve many problems at once; and which, in so doing, go beyond the solution to the problems at hand to create something essentially new.

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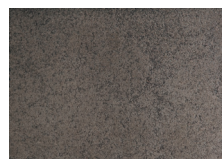
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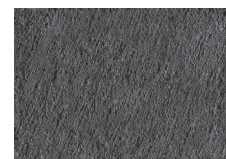
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